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PROSPECTS FOR THE GROWTH AND INFLUENCE of THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL

PREPARED FOR: DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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October 1983

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SUBJECT: Defense Academic Research Support Program (DARSP)

1. In February 1982, the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, inaugurated the subject program to acquire scholarly, unclassified research studies and other scholarly services focusing on socio-political and other factors affecting stability in the Third World. The DARSP is administered by the Defense Intelligence College (DIC). Devised to support analyses within the General Defense Intelligence Program (GDIP) community, the DARSP seeks also to establish and develop contacts between GDIP analysts, DIC and scholar-specialists/experts on the Third World, and to obtain supplemental instructional material for the DIC.
2. You received recently, for use and review, copies of the first in a series of DARSP-supported research studies on the Middle East. Enclosed for the same purposes is a copy (copies) of a study on "Prospects for Growth and Influence of Gulf Cooperation Council." We solicit your careful review and appraisal of this study for its content, usefulness for analysts, and its potential as a vehicle for stimulating analyst-scholar exchanges and relations. If analysts wish, DIC will try to arrange contact with the study's authors.
3. FY1984 has been designated as a review period for DARSP studies, and for an assessment of the worth and validity of the program proper. Your comments, therefore, will be most appreciated. We have received some appraisals on the first DARSP-supported Middle East study on "The Future of Islamic Fundamentalism in the Arab World in the 1980's," and find them very helpful. We will welcome assessments of that study from those who have not yet submitted them.
4. We request by 6 July 1984 your comments on the study on Prospects for Growth and Influence of Gulf Cooperation Council, and your views on the DARSP. Your responses need not be lengthy. Please address them to the undersigned.

ROBERT L. DE GROSS, Ph.D.
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I. INTRODUCTION

The confluence of momentous global and regional developments have accorded the Gulf an epicentric role in Middle Eastern, South Asian and world affairs. During the 1970's, four major factors propelled the Gulf region to a position of unprecedented economic, strategic and political centrality--the world energy crisis; the Islamic Revolution in Iran; the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; and the escalating risks of the Arab-Israeli conflict. These external factors, combined with the Iraq-Iran War and internal instability, provided the critical impetus for the establishment of the Cooperation Council of the Gulf Arab states (Majlis al-Ta'awun li-Duwal al-Khalij al-Arabi) in May 1981, consisting of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. In view of the persistence of multiple crises in the Gulf's periphery, and its economic and strategic importance, the evolution of the GCC is likely to be a central concern of American foreign and security policy in the Middle Eastern region.

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II. CONCEPTUAL SETTING

The GCC is an association of six sovereign Arab states which occupy the contiguous territories located on the western and southern littoral of the Persian Gulf. As a regional grouping of states, the GCC seeks to achieve a community of interests among its members, to promote interstate harmony, regional security and socio-economic cooperation. Its establishment in May 1981, followed the pattern of post-World War II regionalism in the world community of states, which was exemplified by the formation by the European Economic Community, the Organization of African Unity, and other multinational associations and alliances. Yet, the stated aims and manifest efforts of the GCC transcend the functional goals of other regional blocs and intergovernmental organizations. Indeed, the GCC aspires to become the nexus of a comprehensive cooperative effort to cover foreign policy, external and internal security, and socio-economic development, which are to be accomplished within a confederal structure. Consequently, it will be necessary to employ a conceptual framework drawn from the scholarly literature on regional integration, intergovernmental organization, federalism and the policy sciences.¹ This will permit the comparative analysis of the GCC with several types of international, regional and confederal structures, that range over the spectrum from loose associations between states to more integrated confederal and federal entities.

The GCC began as a loose association between dynastic states. However, during its brief period of existence, the Council has been actively engaged in multi-functional cooperative efforts of some substance. Yet, the history of the Middle East and the Arab world has been full of failures of alliances and regional unity efforts. The United Arab Republic, the Baghdad Pact, and the multiple unity schemes involving Libya, Egypt, Syria, Tunisia and the Sudan all ended in failure. Thus, the GCC constitutes a brave new attempt at regional cooperation against the weight of historical experience.

This study shall focus on ten main aspects of the GCC:

1. Analysis of GCC's Historical Background.
2. Dynamics of GCC Interstate Relations.
3. GCC's Organization and Leadership.
4. Establishment of GCC: Motives and Catalysts.
5. GCC's Goals and Activities.
6. Evaluation of GCC's Achievements.
7. Assessment of Member States' Capabilities to meet GCC Purposes.
8. Comparative Analysis of GCC with other Intergovernmental Organizations.
9. GCC's Conflictual Environment and Assessment of Outside Reactions.
10. Prognosis of GCC's Future under several Scenarios of Crisis.

III. SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

The last decade has seen a proliferation of the literature on the Gulf region as a consequence of its growing economic and strategic centrality. In contrast, there has been little written on the GCC itself due to its recent establishment and the paucity of reliable information on its activities. The quality of information made available by the GCC and its member states reflects the cultural predilections of the region and its rulers. According to these accounts, the GCC appears to be evolving at a furious pace, marked by substantial successes and achievements. Yet, the public face of the GCC is considerably different than its internal realities. Consequently, GCC's public statements should not be taken at face value, but checked against information gathered from the opposition Arab press and books by critical Arab writers. This approach has been utilized throughout the present study, which has also benefited from information supplied by knowledgeable consultants.

Most of the existing monographic and periodical literature on the Gulf is useful only as background to this study. These include books and articles on the region and on specific GCC states. Particularly relevant are two multi-authored volumes under A. J. Cottrell's editorship: The Persian Gulf States and Sea Power and Strategy in the Indian Ocean. Equally valuable are a series of four brief studies on the Gulf published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies of London. Other IISS publications are also valuable including its annual, the Military Balance, which presents quantitative assessments of military power and defense expenditures of various countries. Other edited studies on the security problems

of the Gulf include: Murray Gordan (ed.), Conflict in the Persian Gulf and Hossein Amirsadeghi (ed.), The Security of the Persian Gulf. The economic dimension is covered in Tom Niblock (ed.), Social and Economic Development in the Arab Gulf, and Abdel Majid Farid (ed.), Oil and Security in the Arabian Gulf. Among the various studies on U.S. policy toward the Gulf is Emile A. Nakhleh's recent work, The Persian Gulf and American Policy, which presents an Arab point of view and includes a section on the GCC. Another brief overview of GCC is found in Hassan Ali Al-Ebraheem, Kuwait and the Gulf. On Gulf boundary disputes and legal questions, there is no substitute for Sayed Hassan Amin, International and Legal Problems of the Gulf.

Several recently published books in Arabic provide critical assessments on the Gulf and the GCC. These include: Muhammad Ghanem al-Rumaihi, Al-Bitrul wa al-Taqhayyur al-Ijtima'i fi al-Khalij al-Arabi; Abdallah Fahd al-Nafisi, Majlis al-Ta'awun al-Khaliji; and Al-Harakah al Wataniyyah amam Majlis al-Ta'awun al-Khaliji. Another important source of information is the Arabic language periodical literature published in the Gulf, other Arab countries, and Europe. Among those consulted were: Al-Majallah; Al-Watan al-Arabi; Al-Nahar al-Arabi wal-Duwali; Al-Khalij; Al-Hawadith; Al-Mustaqbal; Mustaqbal al-Arabi; Al-Dustur; Al-Bahrayn; Al-Yamamah; Al-Jihad; Al-Ittihad; Majallah al-Dirasat al-Khaliji; Al-Iqtisad wal-'Amal; Al-Hadaf; Al-Qabas; Al-Mujtama'.

For a nativist perspective on the Gulf countries and their problems, it is possible to consult the growing monographic literature by several Gulf authors. These include: Riyad Najib al-Rayyis; Ahmad Khalil Atwah; Jamal Zakariyya Qasim; Sa'id

Al-Ghamidi; Muhammad Hisham Khawajakiyyah; Amin Sa'id; Adil Tabtabai; Abd al-Aziz al-Rashid and Husayn Khaz'al.

Additional information can be gleaned from Arabic and English official documents published by the GCC and the Kuwait News Agency. Valuable chronologies of GCC developments are found in The Middle East Journal, Facts on File and Keesing's Contemporary Archives. More comprehensive and detailed is the information provided by The Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

There exist several useful articles in English and French which deal with GCC's establishment: John Duke Anthony, "The Gulf Cooperation Council", Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, (Summer 1982); Valerie York, "Bid for Gulf Unity", World Today, (August, 1981); Gilles Maarek, "Du Marche Commun Arabe au Conseil de Cooperation du Golfe"; Tiers Monde, (July- September, 1981); Ghassan Ibrahim, "Un Complot dans la Tete", Afrique-Asie, (1-14 February, 1982). Periodically American and European newspapers and magazines have carried short reports on GCC's activities. However, there is no substitute for the information and assessment provided by knowledgeable informants and consultants on GCC's non-public affairs.

IV. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO GCC: EARLY PRECEDENTS

The establishment of GCC was not a fortuitous event. Rather, it represented the culmination of historical trends. Significantly, the conflictual relationships in the Gulf were accompanied by significant attempts at cooperation. The great tribal confederations like the 'Utab, Bani Yas, and Qawasim became the focal points of regional unity. With the introduction of British power, the trend toward tribal cooperation was arrested. The British tendency was to prevent the emergence of major centers of power throughout the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula. A case in point was Britain's opposition to Sa'udi attempts to annex Qatar, Yemen, and parts of Abu Dhabi.

Yet, the idea of regional cooperation remained alive. During the first half of the Twentieth Century, there were proposals to promote inter-Emirate cooperation in the Trucial Shaykhdoms. Also, during the 1940's there were proposals to bring together Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. A change in British policy in the mid-1960's, favored unity schemes in the Trucial Coast to block Sa'udi and Iranian expansionist designs. This was a consequence of the British decision to withdraw from the Gulf and her desire to fill the resulting power vacuum. Despite the fact that these unity efforts were necessitated by British imperial needs, they constituted important precedents for future cooperative schemes.

The Trucial States Council (1952-1968).

The first examples of the new British policy were the establishment of the Trucial States Council and the Trucial Oman Levies during 1951-1952. The original idea to organize such a grouping had been put forth by Britain during the late 1930's, only to be shelved because of war. The objectives of the Council included¹ economic development, and resolution of common problems. The Council never acquired executive and police powers; but it provided a forum for the rulers to meet and discuss their differences. Several functional committees were organized by the Council in 1958 to discuss common problems in such areas as education, public health and agriculture. It was not until 1965, that the Council was provided with financial resources at the initiative of Shaykh Zayid of Abu Dhabi. Under his guidance the Council established the Emirate's Development Office and the Development Fund. The Fund promoted development projects in the areas of electrification, housing, transportation, and communication. Meanwhile, the Arab League provided encouragement and guidance to the Trucial states as well as mediation to settle border disputes, despite British opposition.

Al-Ittihad al-Thuna'i: Abu Dhabi and Dubai

The British government's announcement in 1968 regarding its definitive intention to withdraw from the Gulf during the next three years, induced a new urgency among the Gulf rulers concerning their security. This concern was particularly strong among the Emirates of the Trucial Coast. In February 1968, Abu Dhabi and Dubai concluded a federal union and proceeded to invite Bahrain, Qatar and all the

Trucial Shaykhs to join the new federation. The Abu Dhabi - Dubai federation treaty included specific powers assigned to a federal government in the areas of defense, foreign affairs, internal security, health, education, immigration and judicial affairs.²

From the outset, this attempt at federation proved abortive. Shaykhs Zayid and Rashid had signed the agreement without preparatory work and serious commitment. Moreover, the agreement lacked provisions about a federal structure and made all decisions subject to consensus between the two rulers. Nor did the proposed federation receive encouragement from Bahrain and Qatar. While the federation agreement remained inoperative, it provided impetus for new schemes of regional cooperation.

Al-Ittihad al-Tusa'i: Federation of Nine

To seek regional cooperation, an unprecedented meeting convened in Dubai on February 25, 1968, in response to the invitations of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. A total of nine states were represented including the seven Trucial states, Bahrain and Qatar. The complex negotiation between the nine parties were influenced by a plethora of external and country specific factors such as area, size, population, geographical location, dynastic and tribal affinities, and boundary disputes. There was no preparatory meeting nor agenda to guide the negotiations. This permitted Qatar to propose a federation to unite the five smaller Shaykhdoms -- Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah, Ajman, Ummal-Qaiwain and Fujairah -- as a first step toward a greater federation to include the remaining four larger states. Qatar's proposal would create a Qawasim-led five-state federation that would

effectively neutralize Abu Dhabi's leadership position. The five emirates rejected the Qatari proposal and the conference proceeded to issue a communique announcing the formation of a nine state federation. The stated objectives of this federation were:

1. To strengthen interstate cooperation.
2. To coordinate developmental efforts.
3. To unify foreign policies and defense efforts.

All the subsequent meetings of the Federation's committees and heads of states were disrupted by the historic rivalries between Qatar and Abu Dhabi and Qatar and Bahrain, which centered on their territorial disputes. Moreover, Qatar joined Dubai in discouraging Bahraini membership in the Federation in view of Iran's territorial claims to Bahrain. The Federation's Supreme Council could not resolve the manifold disputes on borders or even agree on an agenda to proceed with the establishment of federal institutions. In view of the foregoing problems, it was clear by 1970, that the Union of Nine was doomed to failure. The mutual enmity between Bahrain and Qatar precluded their participation in any meaningful collective effort.

United Arab Emirates

It was only natural that the Bahrain-Qatar antagonism would prompt the remaining seven members of the Union of Nine to seek a mechanism of unity among themselves. These were the Trucial States which were faced with the consequences of an imminent British withdrawal from the Gulf. Their collective realization of external

vulnerability vis a vis Iran, Oman and Sa'udi Arabia was instrumental in the establishment of a loose federal structure in 1971--The United Arab Emirates. Abu Dhabi's Shaykh Zayid became the Federation's President, as Dubai's Shaykh Maktum was appointed Prime Minister. During its twelve-year existence, the U.A.E. has survived despite persisting internal and external challenges. These have included the ongoing rivalry between Abu Dhabi and Dubai and a plethora of inter-Emirate boundary disputes and economic problems. Nor have the various Emirates succeeded in forging a united foreign policy. It is too early to make any definitive judgements about the success of U.A.E.'s federal experiment.⁴

Nonetheless, the U.A.E. should be regarded as a precursor to the GCC because it reflects in miniature the multifaceted problems of the GCC. In this sense, the U.A.E. constitutes a prototype and a model, should the GCC states decide to proceed toward a tighter framework of cooperation.

Other Forms of Gulf Cooperation

In addition to attempts at regional unity, cooperation among the Gulf states was pursued in a variety of bilateral and multilateral contexts. These covered the fields of education, health, oil, economic development and defense. For example, Kuwait was active in building schools and hospitals in Bahrain, and Sa'udi Arabia funded the causeway project between the mainland and Bahrain. The Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard Company (ASRY) was founded by seven

OAPEC Countries -- Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Sa'udi Arabia and the U.A.E. A number of other petroleum related companies are jointly owned by various Gulf governments. During the 1970's, there was a progressive increase in cooperative efforts. This trend can be clearly discerned in the following list:

- Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (1971)
- Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Development (1971)
- Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (1974)
- Arab Investment Company (1974)
- Sa'udi Development Fund (1974)
- Gulf International Bank (1974)
- Gulf Arab Newsagency (1977)
- Arab Organization For Mineral Resources (1977)
- Gulf Arab University (1980) 5
- Gulf Cooperation Council (1981)

These and many other economic, social and security arrangements were instrumental in the multiplication of Gulf relationships and quickening the tempo of mutual cooperation. Yet, during the 1970's, the cooperative efforts between governments and private concerns tended to be uncoordinated and often disparate; they did not represent the unfolding of a comprehensive and systematic cooperative effort. Thus, the GCC was intended as a novel instrumentality to systematize and institutionalize the ingathering of the Arab Gulf states.

V. DYNAMICS OF GCC INTERSTATE RELATIONS

The modalities of interaction within the GCC will be shaped, to a significant degree, by past patterns of relations among its six members. These relationships are multifaceted and complex. A total of fifteen separate relationships (see table 1) constitute the framework of politics among GCC members, each of which involve several of the following dimensions:

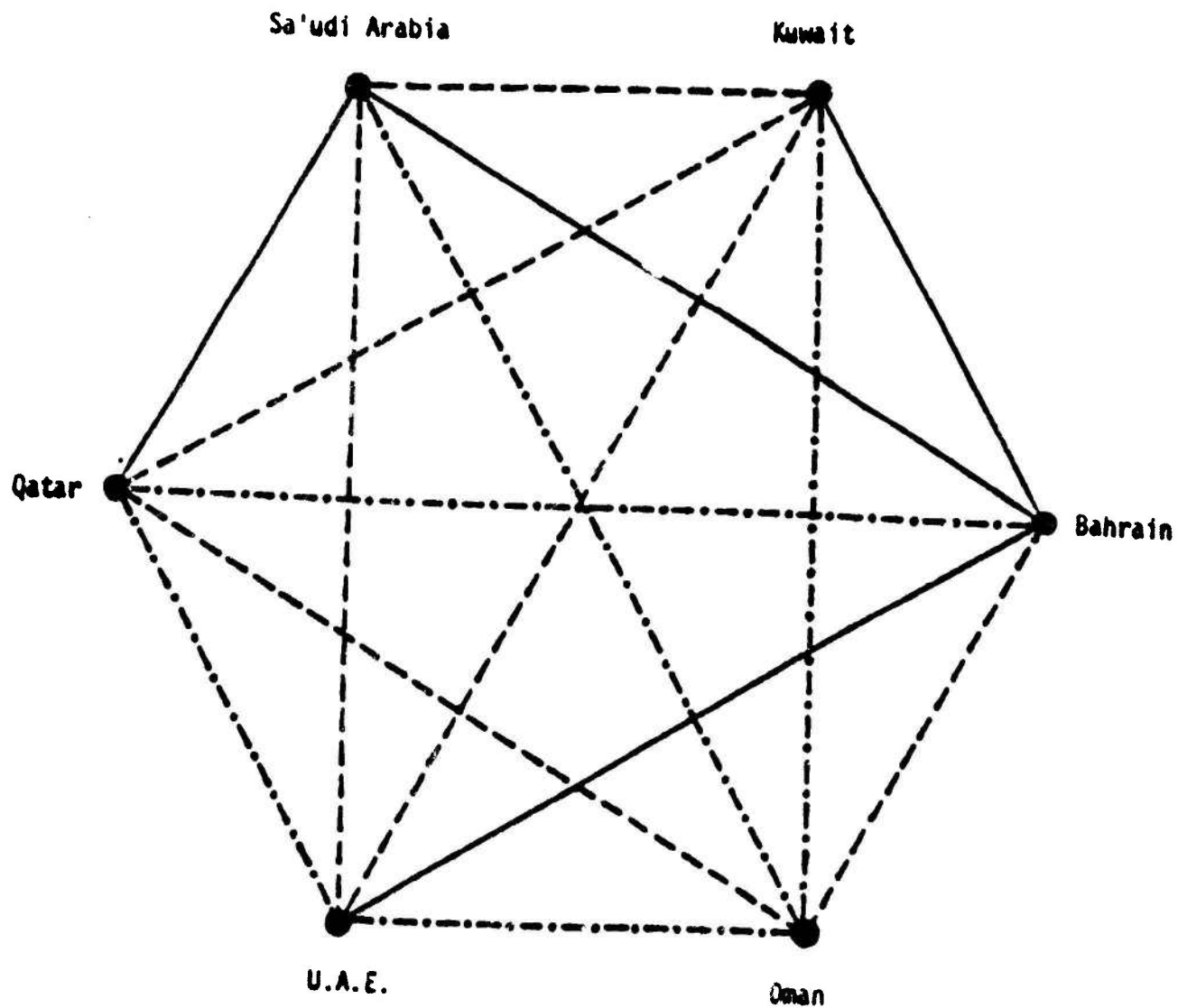
1. Inter-dynastic ties.
2. Tribal relations.
3. Boundary disputes.
4. Foreign policy orientation.
5. Arab policy orientation.
6. Sectarian affiliation of rulers and subjects.
7. Economic relations and oil policies.
8. Strategic and arms procurement policies.

Kuwait--Sa'udi Arabia

There are no ties by either blood or marriage between the Al-Sabah of Kuwait and Al-Sa'ud of Sa'udi Arabia, although the common tribal ancestry of the two families in the distant past has been a factor in their close ties. The Sa'udi--Kuwaiti connection can be traced back to the early Eighteenth Century and the 'Utab branch of the great 'Anaza confederation led by the Al-Sabah family. This historical relationship promoted mutual respect where either family regarded the other as its proper equal. However, the Kuwaiti-Sa'udi relationship is also shaped by another historical determinant. At the end of the Nineteenth Century, the Al-Sa'ud sought refuge in Kuwait when they were driven out of their ancestral homeland; and it was from Kuwait that young King Ibn Sa'ud launched his successful

TABLE 1

DYNAMICS OF INTERSTATE GCC RELATIONS



- A warm and amicable relationship with substantial agreement on policy matters
- - - - - A working relationship which lacks warmth and trust due to divergent interests and some policy differences.
- - A stressful relationship due to major territorial and policy disputes and family rivalry.

campaign to recapture Riyadh in 1904. After the progressive success of Sa'udi arms, Kuwait began to fear the power of King Abd al-Aziz. Thus, Shaykhs Salim and Mubarak rejected Sa'udi Wahhabism, while Abd al-Aziz found the Kuwaitis not sufficiently supportive of his campaigns in the peninsula.¹ Kuwait felt that the Sa'udi King was not thankful for the assistance given to him by the Al-Sabah family.² Despite these vicissitudes, Kuwaiti-Sa'udi relations were gradually normalized and even strengthened during the 1960's. In 1963, Sa'udi Arabia provided troops to defend Kuwait against Iraq.

The cordial thrust of the Sa'udi - Kuwaiti relationship has been instrumental in resolving their boundary and territorial disputes. In 1965, the two states agreed to partition the Neutral Zone, and in 1969, a boundary line was established on the basis of equal sharing of revenues from contiguous oil fields. This agreement, however, did not encompass the continental shelf adjoining the Neutral Zone and the question of sovereignty over two small and uninhabited islands.³ Kuwait had regarded these islands--Qaru and Umm al-Maradim--as being a part of its territory, not associated with the Neutral Zone. On this basis, Kuwait proceeded to grant an oil concession in 1949 to an Aminoil subsidiary, covering the territorial waters of these islands, although no activity was carried out until 1962. In contrast, Sa'udi Arabia has considered these islands as part of the Neutral Zone and thus subject to the same status as the onshore territory. These conflicting claims assumed some urgency amid reports of Sa'udi military occupation of the islands in mid-1977, in the wake of Kuwaiti arms purchases from the U.S.S.R. and her opposition to Sa'udi policy at the OPEC Conference at Doha

(1976). Agreement to partition this offshore area appears to have been reached during December 1978 without the resort to armed conflict.

Areas of divergence between Kuwait and Sa'udi Arabia also include foreign policy, domestic politics and arms procurement policies. Unlike the close ties between Sa'udi Arabia and the U.S., Kuwait has manifested a strong desire to appear non-aligned in global politics. In quest of nonalignment, Kuwait established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1963. The Soviet connection allows Kuwait to deflect possible Iraqi or Iranian threats to its territory as well as satisfy domestic and Arab critics of close ties with the West. Kuwait's purchase of Soviet arms in 1977 was a symbolic gesture of nonalignment and diversification of weapons suppliers to reduce heavy dependence on Britain. In recent years, Sa'udi objections to Kuwaiti-Soviet relations have been muted, as the Kingdom has hinted that it might renew its old treaty relations with the U.S.S.R. concluded in 1926. The visit of Foreign Minister Sa'ud al-Faysal to Moscow as a part of a joint Arab delegation on Palestine, appears to be an effort to increase Sa'udi leverage on the U.S. On the whole, foreign policy differences have not had a detrimental effect on Sa'udi-Kuwaiti relations. More substantial is the disparity between the domestic policies of the two states. Kuwait's relatively liberal and free-wheeling society contrasts sharply with the strict Wahhabi environment of Sa'udi Arabia. This factor has created some concern in the Kingdom which fears the negative impact of liberalizing influences on its polity.

Bahrain--Qatar

There are no close ties between the two ruling families of Bahrain and Qatar. Instead, there has been protracted animosity between the two dynasties for historical reasons. The Al-Khalifa family of Bahrain migrated from Kuwait to the Qatar peninsula in the mid-eighteenth century and settled at Zubara. In 1783, the Al-Khalifa captured the Bahrain archipelago from Persia and moved their capital to al-Manama. Nevertheless, the Al-Khalifa continued to claim the Zubara area as the basis of the continued allegiance of the al-Nu'aim tribe to Bahrain's ruling family. This claim has been rejected by the Al-Thani ruling family of Qatar which moved to assert its full sovereignty over the Zubara area in 1937. In response, Bahrain declared an economic boycott of Qatar which seriously crippled its economy. Mutual animosity persisted, as elements from both families would take refuge in either camp to secure support for their ambitions against their respective rulers. It is said that Shaykh Ahmad of Qatar who ruled until 1972 and Shaykh Isa, present ruler of Bahrain, had never met until the 1968 negotiations on organizing a federation in the Lower Gulf.

Aside from Zubara, Bahrain and Qatar have been involved in a lingering dispute concerning the Hawar Islands. This group of sixteen islands off the west coast of Qatar became a conflictual issue in the 1930's over oil concessions. While Bahrain's ownership of the islands has been generally recognized, proximity to the peninsula and Bahrain's claim to the continental shelf have provoked Qatari counter-claims. The issue came to a head in 1936 when Bahrain established a military post on Hawar Island prompting Qatar to appeal

to the British Political Resident who awarded the islands to Bahrain in 1939. Despite periodic Kuwaiti and Sa'udi mediation attempts, the dispute was not resolved. Its regional implications contributed to the collapse of the 'Union of Nine' in 1971 -- (al-Itihad al-Tusa'i). Subsequent attempts to achieve bilateral economic cooperation were aborted as Qatar became disenchanted with Sa'udi support for Bahrain. This became evident during the OPEC meeting of December 1976 at Doha, where Qatar voted with the majority in favor of a substantial oil price increase against Sa'udi wishes. As a consequence, Sa'udi Arabia declared its support in favor of the Bahraini position on the Hawar Islands. In 1978, Qatar detained fishermen from Bahrain following the latter's naval maneuvers near the islands. Further controversy arose early in 1983 when Qatar again protested Bahrain's naval exercises and its decision to name a new warship "Hawar". The thrust of Bahraini policy is to achieve a quid pro quo by conceding Zubara to Qatar in return for the latter's withdrawal of claims to the Hawar Islands. This territorial dispute constitutes a major challenge to the GCC and Sa'udi Arabian diplomacy. During 1983, there were signs that GCC mediation had shown some tentative results, as the respective Crown Princes of Bahrain and Qatar visited each others' capitals.

In foreign policy, both states are pro-Western, although Bahrain has closer security ties with the U.S. than Qatar. In the Arab context, Qatar has displayed a greater degree of concern for Palestinian rights than Bahrain. Finally, the disparity in oil wealth and developmental status is a source of mutual envy. Bahrain covets Qatar's oil wealth as Qatar envies Bahrain's status as a highly developed financial center.

Qatar--Sa'udi Arabia

Although there exists no blood or marriage ties between the Al-Sa'ud and Al-Thani families, the influence relation between the two dynasties has been substantial as a consequence of historical factors. The emergence of Al-Thani power on the Peninsula depended on the dynasty's ability to control and secure the allegiance of certain Wahhabi tribes, which seasonally migrated to Qatar from al-Hasa. As Wahhabis, these tribes owed allegiance to the Najdi Sa'udis. Until the 1940's, King Ibn Sa'ud apparently considered all of Qatar to be a part of his dominions. Only the British presence in the Gulf prevented the old king from annexing Qatar. Eventually, Al-Thani rule over the tribes was consolidated through British protection of the dynasty coupled with the availability of oil revenues to secure tribal loyalties. Since the British departure, the Al-Thani state has been careful to conform to Wahhabism and to follow Sa'udi guidance in both its domestic and foreign policies. However, there remain certain territorial questions which have not been resolved definitively. In December 1965, an agreement was concluded delimiting the continental shelf to the west of Qatar at the Bay of al-Sa'wa. Yet, the status of this accord is unclear since it is kept secret and unratified. Another outstanding issue is that of Khawr al-'Udayd which also involves Abu Dhabi (see below). The basic thrust of Sa'udi-Qatari relations is not expected to change, despite periodic disagreements and disputes.

Bahrain--Sa'udi Arabia

The historical relationship between the Al-Khalifa and Al-Sa'ud is based on their common membership in the 'Utab branch of the 'Anaza

tribal confederation. After the conquest of Bahrain by Al-Khalifa, the family resisted the imposition of Wahhabism on the Island with British help during the mid-1800's. Since the reemergence of Sa'udi power during the early 1900's, relations of the Al-Khalifa and the House of Sa'ud have been generally amicable. Agreements have been concluded on the continental shelf (1958) and close economic and security ties have been forged in recent years. The decline of Bahraini oil production, has been compensated by making the island a major center of finance and commerce with substantial Sa'udi support. This increased economic dependence on the Sa'udis has been augmented by Bahrain's security needs vis a vis Iran. The Shah's claim to the island has been replaced by Khomeini's attempts to radicalize the indigenous Shi'ite majority. Both these factors have dictated an increasingly close security coordination between Bahrain and Sa'udi Arabia, particularly after a reported Shi'ite plot against the government in December 1981.

Despite the progressive intensification of the Sa'udi-Bahraini relationship, there have been misgivings on both sides which are likely to have a constraining influence in the future. The Bahrainis fear the prospect of becoming an offshore extension of Sa'udi Arabia, especially after the completion of the causeway joining the mainland to the island. Already Sa'udi influence has been instrumental in aborting the political liberalization experiment of the 1960's. From the Sa'udi perspective, the Island's relatively open society has been regarded as a potential threat to the Kingdom's domestic conservative milieu. While many Sa'udis welcome the opportunity of easy access to the Island's cosmopolitan life, their government can be expected to

discourage Bahraini future attempts to follow the Kuwaiti model of socio-political development.

Kuwait-Bahrain

The ties between the ruling families of Al Khalifa and Al Sabah can be traced back to 'Utab alliance of the Anaza tribal confederation of the early Eighteenth Century. As the leaders of the 'Utab, the Al Sabah established themselves in Kuwait while the Al Khalifa occupied the Zubara region of Qatar as a prelude to their conquest of Bahrain. In recent years, Bahrain-Kuwait relations have been generally amicable. Both are relatively open societies in sharp contrast to Sa'udi Arabia. In view of its greater wealth and influence, Kuwait has extended Bahrain considerable economic aid and played the role of mediator with Sa'udi Arabia in resolving the ongoing disputes between Bahrain and Qatar.

There are some important differences in foreign policy. While Kuwait strives for some degree of non-alignment, Bahrain has cast its lot with the West by following Sa'udi Arabia's lead. Similarly, Kuwait pursues a markedly more activist Arab nationalist and Islamic policy than Bahrain, which usually assumes a subdued posture on these issues.

Qatar-Kuwait

In view of their geographical non-contiguity, there are no territorial or political disputes between Qatar and Kuwait. However, the Al Thani ruling family was not associated with the 'Utab-Anaza confederation which constitutes the common tribal crucible of the

Sa'udi, Sabah and Khalifah families. Consequently, Kuwaiti and Sa'udi Arabian mediation of the Bahrain-Qatar dispute, has often been perceived as being partial to Bahrain by some Qataris. Despite this factor, the ties remain generally amicable. Kuwait does not constitute a threat factor to Qatar as does Sa'udi Arabia. Despite its Wahhabism, Qatar seems to be more disposed to emulating Kuwait rather than Sa'udi Arabia.

U.A.E.-Qatar

The Qatar-United Arab Emirates (UAE) relationship exhibits substantial complexity, since it involves both inter-dynastic and boundary problems. Moreover, this interstate relationship is strongly influenced by Sa'udi Arabia and the Abu Dhabi-Dubai rivalry within the Federation.

The most serious interstate issue has involved Khawr al-'Udayd -- a marshy inlet at the eastern base of the Qatar Peninsula. This dispute has pitted Qatar against Abu Dhabi of the U.A.E., with Sa'udi Arabia as the third party. The question of ownership has been complicated by the changing patterns of tribal migrations, shifting tribal allegiances and the powerful role of Sa'udi Arabia (see below). This territorial conflict has been exacerbated by the traditional warmth of Qatari relations with Dubai. The Bahraini economic boycott of the 1930's prompted Qatar to turn to Dubai as a venue of essential imports. This economic tie extended to sharing a common currency -- the Qatar/Dubai riyal, from the mid-1960's until 1971.

The Qatar-Dubai axis was further cemented by intermarriage between the Al Maktum and the Banu Ali branch of the Al Thani family. The important alliance was the marriage of Shaykh Ahmad, ruler of Qatar, to the daughter of Shaykh Rashid Al Maktum, the ruler of Dubai. After Shaykh Ahmad's deposition as ruler, he lived in Dubai as an exile until his death. Shaykh Ahmad's residing in Dubai had a cooling effect on the relations between Shaykh Rashid and Shaykh Khalifah, the new ruler of Qatar. Yet, their common animosity toward the Al Nahiyyan family of Abu Dhabi has persisted, partly due to Qatar's conflict with Abu Dhabi centering on Khawr al-'Udayd. The onshore boundary between Qatar and U.A.E. remains to be officially demarcated. However, the governments of both states are believed to have acknowledged shared sovereignty over the boundary region, with the defacto border being a line extended coastward from their offshore boundary that had been delineated in March 1969. Thus, the jurisdictional status of disputed offshore islands appears to have been resolved. Among these was Halul island which the 1969 agreement granted to Qatar, in addition to al-Ashat and Shara'iwah; Dayyinah was granted to Abu Dhabi through a deviation in the Continental shelf⁵ boundary.

Sa'udi Arabia--Abu Dhabi (U.A.E.)

Abu Dhabi's claim to the Khawr is based upon the allegiance of the Bani Yas tribe to the Al Nahayyan family. The Bani Yas occupied the littoral of Khawr al-'Udayd between 1869 and 1880. Qatari attempts to assert control over the area were resisted by the British who supported Abu Dhabi's claim in 1878 and 1937.⁶ Instead, the British proposed a compromise settlement by advocating the extension of Qatar's borders to the vicinity of the Khawr without encompassing the inlet. The British suggestion was challenged by Sa'udi Arabia which advanced its own territorial claims against both Abu Dhabi and Qatar. The Sa'udi move was prompted by the possible discovery of oil in and around the inlet, as well as the Kingdom's determination to acquire an alternate outlet to the Gulf. Consequently, the Sa'udis asserted their claim of ownership to the Khawr in various negotiations with Britain. In December 1965, the Sa'udi and Qatari governments concluded an agreement, without consulting Britain, delimiting their land and offshore boundaries. In response, the British rejected the validity of this agreement since it prejudiced the territorial rights of Abu Dhabi. The issue remained dormant until 1970, when Sa'udi Arabia raised the larger question of its boundary with Abu Dhabi centering on the territory south of the Liwa Oasis. The Sa'udi interest was prompted by the discovery of oil at Shu'aiba. After four years of negotiations, the parties concluded an

agreement on July 29, 1974, the text of which remains unpublished. However, it appeared that Abu Dhabi had made significant concessions, including a promise not to exploit the portion of the Zarrara oil field lying within its territory and granting Sa'udi Arabia access through a corridor to Khawr al-'Udayd. In return, the Sa'udis withdrew their claim to the Buraimi Oasis.

U.A.E.- Oman

In geographical and historical terms, the present United Arab Emirates is an extension of Oman. The ruling families of the region, known as the Omani Coast or Trucial Coast, were politically subordinate to the Imams and/or Sultans of Oman until the advent of British power in the Gulf. Even during the Twentieth Century, Trucial Coast rulers would frequently visit Oman to accept gifts and subsidies from the Sultan. Significantly, the Omani ruling house belonged to the Ibadi sect of Islam, while the Trucial Shaykhs were all Sunnis.

The discovery and production of oil in Abu Dhabi and then Dubai, induced a drastic alteration of the traditional patterns of politics in the whole Oman region. Thus, the subordinate position of Al-Nahayyan (Abu Dhabi) and Al-Maktum (Dubai) to the Al Bu Said of Oman was reversed, as the two families became rich benefactors to their former master. Moreover, the U.A.E. - Oman relationship is affected by several unresolved boundary disputes. One of the most significant involves the Southern border of the Omani-held Musandam Peninsula and the Emirates of Ras al-Khaimah and Sharjah. The Al Bu Sa'id Sultans of Oman have had a history of rivalry with the

Qawasim--the once powerful masters of the Trucial Coast. This rivalry has been sharpened by the traditional enmity between the Shihuh, the principal tribe of Musandam, and the Qawasim who now rule Ras al-Khaimah and Sharjah. Oman has claimed that Ras al-Khaimah had encroached upon its territory in the R'us al-Jibal region beginning in 1951. This claim centered on a sixteen kilometer stretch of land between the villages of Dawra and Tims in Ras al-Khaimah. Significantly, Oman raised this issue after the discovery of offshore oil deposits in the area, although the claim was justified in terms of the affinity between Oman and the Shihuh and Habus tribes living there. The dispute was discussed but not resolved at the 1974 Islamic Summit at Lahor. Troop movements were reported on both sides of the border in 1977, including an Omani military penetration into Ras al-Khaimah. Simultaneously, oil drilling was suspended when Sultan Qabus dispatched a warship to the waters of Ras al-Khaimah, because the Omani continental shelf boundaries with Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah were undefined.

Another dispute concerned the coastal village of Dibbah located on the Eastern side of the Musandam border. This area had been divided into three distinct spheres of control under Oman, Fujairah and Sharjah. Despite their affinity with Oman, the Shihuh and Habus tribes of Dibbah have been courted by the U.A.E. In 1975, it was reported that some of these tribesmen had accepted U.A.E. citizenship from Ras al-Khaimah. In January 1978, Ras al-Khaimah was extended Kuwaiti support to build an oil refinery in the contested Dawra-Tims area, prompting an Omani military threat to Buraimi (see below). Repeated Saudi and Kuwaiti mediation efforts have failed despite

U.A.E.'s willingness to seek a diplomatic solution. Nor has it been possible to define the continental shelf boundaries between Oman and the Emirates of Ras al-Khaimah and Sharjah.

Shaykh Zayid's policy to placate Oman included giving strong support to Sultan Quabus during the Dhufar rebellion. However, the Sultan's success against the rebels in 1975 enabled him to reassert his claims in the Musandam area. Meanwhile, other sources of friction over water rights and border problems around the town of Al-'Ain were resolved at least on a temporary basis. The fall of the Shah, and the subsequent Islamic threat from Iran induced a switch in Omani policy as the Sultan sought rapprochement with the Emirates. In late 1979, the two sides announced the conclusion of a settlement⁹ on their border disputes. However, foreign policy remains a potentially conflictual issue. Oman's Anglo-American ties are looked upon with suspicion by the U.A.E. The growing American presence at Salala, Massira, Khasab and Thamarit runs against the Arab nationalist sentiments of many U.A.E. leaders and citizens. It appears that Omani attempts to draw the U.A.E. into security arrangements has not fully succeeded. These have included proposals to construct a military airport in Fujayrah and a 150 mile pipeline from Abu Dhabi to Fujayrah to bypass the Strait of Hormuz in the event of its blockade.¹⁰

Despite their recent rapprochement, there have been persistent fears in the U.A.E. concerning future Omani ambitions fed by increasing American support. The Emirates of Fujayrah and Sharjah which occupy the territory between Oman proper and Musandam are considered targets of possible efforts to establish a greater Oman.

Moreover, Oman has courted Dubai to weaken Abu Dhabi's efforts to establish a tighter federation. An additional threat factor is the significant presence of Omani subjects in Abu Dhabi's army -- up to 70%. Another conflictual dimension is the sharp contrast between U.A.E.'s relatively open and affluent society and Oman's more traditional and authoritarian setting.

Oman--Sa'udi Arabia--(Abu Dhabi)

The Al Bu Sa'id and the Ibn Sa'ud have been in rivalry since the emergence of the Sa'udi state in the Eighteenth Century. This rivalry has been fueled by the sectarian-ideological enmity between Omani Ibadism and Sa'udi Wahhabism. A major bone of contention between the two countries has been the Buraimi Oasis which also involves Abu Dhabi. Al-Buraimi is a strategic oasis of nine villages located ninety miles inland from Abu Dhabi city. During the Nineteenth Century, both Sa'udi Arabia and Oman controlled the oasis alternatively. After 1867, Buraimi came under Omani rule until the 1890's, when three villages passed to the control of Abu Dhabi. In August 1952, a Sa'udi police detachment occupied the village of Hamasah in Buraimi on the basis of considerable local tribal allegiance to the Kingdom. The Sa'udi move brought British condemnation and a series of bilateral negotiations leading to the Standstill Agreement of 1952. All parties agreed to desist from provocative action and in 1954, Sa'udi Arabia and Britain referred the Buraimi dispute to an arbitration tribunal that was convened in Geneva. The tribunal was disbanded, however, after the British member of the court representing Abu Dhabi and Oman charged the

Sa'udi's with bad faith in bribing and coaching the witnesses. On October 26, 1955, the British-led Trucial Oman Scouts reoccupied the oasis after ejecting the Sa'udi police force. Subsequently, the British reverted Buraimi to Abu Dhabi and Oman. In August 1974, Britain and Sa'udi Arabia initiated negotiations under the auspices of U.N. Secretary General Hammarskjold which proved unsuccessful. In 1966, Abu Dhabi and Oman confirmed the defacto division of the oasis between their respective jurisdictions. King Faysal's call in 1970 to settle the Buraimi dispute culminated in the 1974 Agreement between Sa'udi Arabia and the U.A.E. This provided Sa'udi diplomatic recognition of the U.A.E. and concessions by Abu Dhabi on the Khawr al-'Udayd inlet and the Zarrarah oil fields. In addition, Sa'udi Arabia acknowledged the Abu Dhabi-Oman status quo on Buraimi including Abu Dhabi's sovereignty over six villages. Despite reports of technical defects in the 1970 Agreement, Saudi-U.A.E. relations continued to improve due to Abu Dhabi's support of Sa'udi policies at the December 1976 OPEC Conference in Doha. However, there has not been a formal agreement between Oman and Sa'udi Arabia delineating their common border.

Despite their differences, there has been a significant convergence between Omani and Sa'udi foreign and security policies. The mutuality of interests includes their common reliance on U.S. power for defense and threats from Islamic Iran and Marxist Yemen.

Oman--Kuwait

These two states represent the opposite ends of GCC's political spectrum. In virtually every aspect of socio-political existence,

Kuwait and Oman manifest significant differences. Kuwait's affluent and relatively liberal society stands in stark contrast to Oman's underdeveloped and authoritarian setting. Oman is openly hostile to the Kuwaiti policy of allowing Arab nationalist and Islamist expatriates to organize and publish on its own soil. These include many Omanis living in Kuwait who oppose Sultan Qabus. In addition, Oman has been suspicious of the Palestinians who constitute a large sector of Kuwait's population. In fact, Oman neither permits a large Palestinian expatriate presence on its territory, nor does it lend active support to the Palestinian cause. In recent years, this issue has assumed some importance, partly due to Oman's attempts to make its Arab policy consistent with its pro-U.S. orientation.

More serious is the clash of foreign policies. Kuwait's commitment to the neutralization of the Gulf and balance between the superpowers runs counter to Oman's strongly Anglo-American alignment. In addition, Kuwait has attempted to counter Omani claims on U.A.E. territory and has effectively blocked Omani proposals to build a pipeline from Kuwait, Sa'udi Arabia, Qatar and U.A.E., to the Omani coast or Fujayrah, to bypass the Straits of Hormuz.

Kuwait--U.A.E

Relations between Kuwait and the U.A.E. have been generally amicable. Kuwait has been supportive of U.A.E.'s federal structure, although somewhat envious of Abu Dhabi's affluence and potential for socio-economic growth in view of its significant oil and land resources. Thus, Kuwait has followed the policy of other GCC states in playing Dubai against Abu Dhabi to keep the latter in check. She

has also supported the Emirates of Ras al-Khaimah and Sharjah against Omani territorial claims. On the economic front, Kuwaiti entrepreneurs have attempted to play a dominant role in the U.A.E. which has created some resentment among the natives. However, both states support Arab nationalism and pursue relatively liberal domestic policies. In foreign affairs, Kuwait has countered Omani attempts to involve the U.A.E. in Western security arrangements. No major problems are likely to affect the relations between these states.

Bahrain--Oman

The relations between Bahrain and Oman go back to the Nineteenth Century when the Island had come under Omani domination. In recent years, no major issue has divided the two sides. In fact there has been some convergence of interest in foreign and domestic affairs. Both countries are pro-Western, although Bahrain follows the Saudi lead in downplaying its American ties. Also, Bahrain's close relations with Kuwait tend to dampen the likelihood of close ties with Oman. In addition, many Omanis living in Bahrain are opposed to Sultan Qabus. Two underground organizations in Bahrain and Oman oppose the ruling Khalifa family as well as Sultan Qabus: Jabhat al-Sha'biyyah and Jabhat al-Dimuqratiyyah. Thus, suppression of these organizations constitutes a common objective for the two states. Moreover, since the Shah's fall, Oman has been forced to abandon its pro-Iranian posture, which had alienated Bahrain. This problem became irrelevant with the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran which constitutes a major threat to both states.

Bahrain--U.A.E.

The recent pattern of interstate relationships involving Bahrain, and the U.A.E., has its roots in the Nineteenth Century. In 1868 Bahrain and Abu Dhabi joined together to invade the al-Wakrah and al-Bid'a areas of Qatar. In the present context, therefore, Bahrain-U.A.E. relations are strongly influenced by their common enmity toward Qatar stemming from territorial claims and counterclaims. Moreover, the two countries have maintained strong economic links; until 1972, the Bahraini Dinar was the currency of Abu Dhabi. It is no accident that Bahrain's ties to the U.A.E. center mostly on Abu Dhabi, in view of the latter's wealth and willingness to employ Bahrainis in high bureaucratic and military positions. In the diplomatic field, Bahrain has been asked by Abu Dhabi to use its close ties with Sa'udi Arabia to mediate Sa'udi-Abu Dhabi territorial disputes. In contrast, Bahrain has not been well disposed toward Dubai in view of the latter's Iranian ties and position as competitor in business.

Oman--Qatar

The relations between Oman and Qatar are the least important in the complex network of GCC interstate ties. Qatar's close alignment with Sa'udi Arabia precludes a close tie with Oman. However, there exists some commonality in the antagonism which these states manifest toward the U.A.E. because of boundary disputes. While the Al-Thani (Wahabi) and Al Bu Sa'id (Ibadi) families are not particularly close, there are no major conflictual issues between them.

Disputes within the U.A.E.

During its twelve-year existence, the U.A.E. has failed to resolve the political and boundary disputes among its seven constituent emirates. U.A.E.'s territory is fragmented by a mosaic of intertwined sovereignties. Only Abu Dhabi and Umm al-Qhawayn are territorially integral units.¹¹ The major inter-Emirate disputes include:

Abu Dhabi vs Dubai

The border problem was provisionally settled in 1968 by the creation of the Neutral Zone, the oil revenues of which would be equally shared by the two emirates. After manifestations of unity in the early 1970's, the two emirates have recently become rivals. Differences have arisen over the allocation of top positions in the Federal military command and Dubai's tendency to develop independent ties with foreign powers such as Iran.

Fujayrah vs Sharjah

Only in 1952 did the British formally consider Fujayrah a separate emirate. Until 1901, it was considered part of Sharjah. Serious fighting broke out in 1972 with casualties on both sides. The federal government promptly sought to resolve the issue which centered on access to a well.

Dubai vs Sharjah

The border between these two emirates had not been clearly demarcated. In May 1976, Sharjah began the construction of the Charles de Gaulle business complex on land claimed by Dubai. However, fighting was averted through adjudication.

GCC as Transnational System

The foregoing analysis of GCC interstate relations reflects the complex milieu into which the council was born. The totality of the fifteen distinct sets of relations between GCC's six member states constitutes a transnational political system (see Table 1). As a system, its various components are interdependent and any major change in the network of fifteen relationships will produce changes in the system as a whole. As presently constituted, the GCC system possesses its own internal equilibrium maintained by ever-changing coalitions of states and social forces depending on specific issues of interstate, domestic and foreign policy. The internal dynamics of the situation is governed by incremental and quantum shifts of policy which inexorably seem to militate against disequilibrium and in favor of maintaining balance. This pattern which reflects the conservative political culture of the GCC, is a persistent characteristic, as will be seen throughout this study.

VI. GCC'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

The expressed structural aim of the GCC is to achieve a "confederal" union of member states through coordination, intergration and amalgamation in various fields. The structural and functional characteristics of the GCC are outlined in the organization's Charter which was promulgated on May 25, 1981. The three main components of organizational structure are:

1. the Supreme Council.
2. the Ministerial Council.
3. the General Secretariat.

Supreme Council

This is GCC's highest authority and is composed of the heads of member states. Its presidency rotates among the six rulers in alphabetical order. Every GCC member has the right to call a ministerial meeting so long as the call is seconded by at least one other member.¹ The functions of the Supreme Council are to:

1. Review matters of interest to member states;
2. Lay down the higher policy of the GCC and the guidelines it should follow;
3. Review recommendations, reports, studies and common projects submitted by the Ministerial Council for approval;
4. Review reports and studies prepared by the Secretary-General;
5. Approve the framework for dealing with states and other international organizations;

6. Approve the rules of procedure of the Commission of Settlement of Disputes and nominate its members;
7. Appoint the Secretary-General;
8. Amend the Charter of the GCC;
9. Approve the internal rules and regulations of GCC;
10. Approve the budget of the General Secretariat.

2

Ministerial Council

This body consists of the Foreign Ministers of the member states or their subordinates who shall meet six times a year, once every two months, in addition to extraordinary meetings when requested by at least two member states. The functions of the Ministerial Council are to:

1. Propose policies based on recommendations, reports, studies and common projects aimed at developing cooperation and coordination between member states in various fields, and implement resulting resolutions;
2. Endeavor to encourage, develop and coordinate existing activities between member states in all fields by referring such matters to the Supreme Council with recommendations for appropriate action;
3. Submit recommendations to relevant ministers on formulating policies to implement resolutions and recommendations of the Supreme Council and Ministerial Council;
4. Stimulate cooperation and coordination between private sectors, enhance existing ties between Chambers of Commerce and Industry and encourage the free flow of nationals;
5. Refer any aspect of cooperation requiring technical or specialized assistance to committees for study and recommendation;
6. Review proposals on amending the Charter and submit recommendations to the Supreme Council;
7. Approve rules of procedure of the Ministerial Council as well as rules of procedure of the Secretariat-General;
8. Appoint the Assistant Secretaries-General as nominated by the Secretary-General for a renewable three-year period;

9. Approve periodic reports on administrative and financial affairs prepared by the Secretary-General and submit recommendations to the Supreme Council for approval of the budget of the Secretariat-General;
10. Make arrangements for meetings of the Supreme Council and prepare its agenda; and
11. Review other matters referred to it by the Supreme Council. 3

General Secretariat

This organization consists of the Office of the Secretary General and six Directorates in charge of Political Affairs, Economic Affairs, Environment and Human Resources, Legal Affairs, Financial and Administrative Affairs and an Information Center. The Directorate of Political Affairs consists of four Departments -- Arab Relations, International Relations, Security Relations, and Media Affairs. The Directorate of Economic Affairs supervises the activities of five Departments: Fiscal Affairs, Energy, Trade and Industry, Agriculture and Transport/Communications. The Directorate of Environment and Human Resources oversees five Departments -- Education, Health, Human Resources, Social Affairs and Cultural Affairs. The Directorate of Legal Affairs is divided into four Departments responsible for Legislative and Legal Institutions, Legislation and Research, Precedents and Cases, and Treaties. The General Directorate of Financial/Administrative Affairs oversees the Departments of Support Services, Accounts and Personnel. Finally, the Information Center includes the Computer Data Bank and the Library. The functions of the Secretariat are to:

1. Prepare studies on cooperation and coordination between Member States and their plans and programmes for integration;
2. Prepare periodic reports on the work of the GCC;

3. Monitor the implementation by Member States of resolutions and recommendations by the Supreme Council and Ministerial Council;
4. Prepare reports and studies called for by the Supreme Council and Ministerial Council;
5. Prepare draft administrative and financial regulations commensurate with the growth of the GCC and the expansion of its responsibilities;
6. Prepare budgets and accounts of the GCC;
7. Make arrangements for meetings of the Ministerial Council and prepare its agenda;
8. Recommend to the Chairman of the Ministerial Council the convocation of an extraordinary session whenever necessary; and
9. Perform any other tasks entrusted to it by the Supreme Council and Ministerial Council. 4

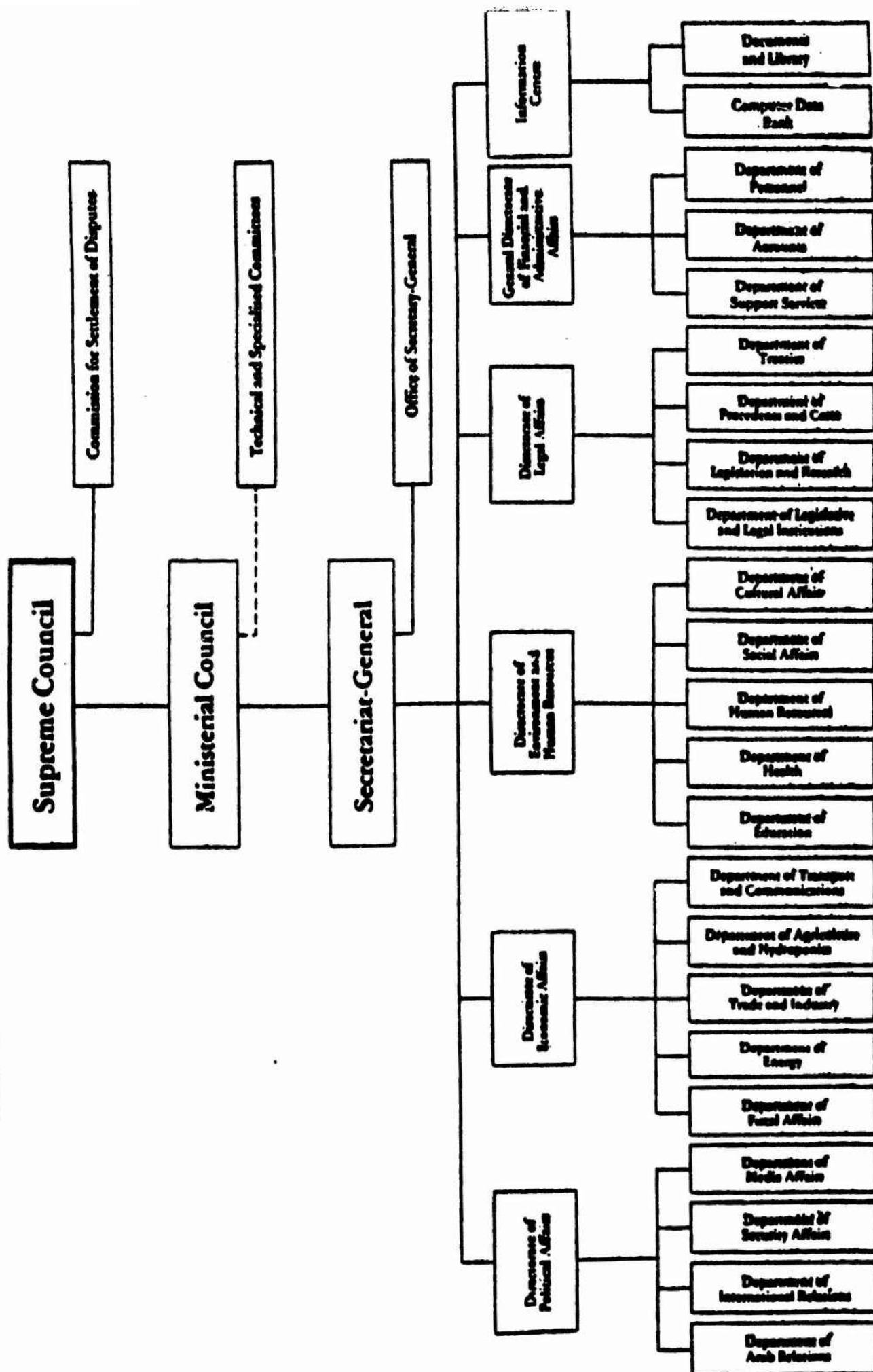
The Secretary-General is appointed by the Supreme Council which shall also determine the conditions and terms of his office, currently three years. The Secretary-General shall be a subject of one of the member states, and will be directly responsible for the functions of the Assistant Secretaries, the General Secretariat and the progress of work in its six directorates consisting of 23 sectors as outlined in table 2.

Rules of Procedure

The Charter consisting of 22 articles is supplemented by the Rules of Procedure which are designed to govern the operations of GCC's central organs. Under these rules, the Supreme Council shall hold one regular or 'summit' meeting each year to be attended by at least two-thirds of the member states which makes the session valid. This means that if four members are present, their decisions are considered binding on the others. The Supreme Council's resolutions

Structural Organisation

TABLE 2



on substantive matters shall be carried by unanimous agreement of the member states present and voting, while procedural resolutions shall be carried by majority vote. Additional rules govern the proceedings of the Ministerial Council and the Commission for Settlement of Disputes.

Operation of GCC Central Organs

At the present stage of its evolution, the GCC is still groping for an organizational and political identity. Its central organs are not fully operational and the patterns of interstate relations continue to be in flux. In order to evaluate the GCC, it will be necessary to focus on its organizational structure and operational modalities.

The structural organization of GCC reflects the veritable intentions of its founders, rather than their optimistic pronouncements designed for popular consumption. With the single exception of Saudi Arabia, GCC's founders did not wish to establish a federal or even confederal union, but a loose framework of cooperation to strengthen the power and affluence of their respective families. Thus, in structural and operational terms, there is little to suggest a serious and concerted move toward tighter and more enduring forms of unity. Indeed, at this initial stage of GCC's development, the Charter's stated aim "to achieve a confederal union" is an overstatement. In most confederations a limited amount of power is delegated to some central authority; this has not happened in the GCC. Neither the Supreme Council, nor the Ministerial Council and the Secretariat have become the repositories of residual power in

any significant degree. The emphasis on unanimity in the Charter on all substantive matters discussed in the Supreme Council and the Ministerial Council brings into play the mutual veto thereby rendering GCC's two top organs subject to immobilism. Hence, the resort to two modalities of GCC operation -- 1) consensus and 2) incrementalism. The quest for unanimity prompts the six members to seek consensus by effecting incremental adjustments in their positions. The result is slow progress after lengthy negotiations, followed by a facade of optimism and solidarity.

GCC Elites: Composition and Decision-Making

The collectivity of GCC's decision-making elite includes three levels of officials: the six rulers, the Ministerial Council and the Secretariat. At the very top are the six rulers who collectively constitute the Supreme Council -- the GCC's supreme decisional body. These rulers -- Fahd (Sa'udi Arabia); Isa Al-Khalifa (Bahrain); Zayid Al-Nahiyyan (U.A.E.); Jabir al-Ahmad Al-Sabah (Kuwait); Sultan Qabus (Oman); and Khalifah Al-Thani (Qatar) present a relatively homogenous profile. All have had a modest education of a traditional Islamic type, except Sultan Qabus who briefly attended Sandhurst. In age, the rulers are mostly in their fifties and early sixties. All six served in ministerial positions or were crown princes. In political orientation, the group displayed various degrees of conservatism and authoritarianism; only in Kuwait and U.A.E., the rulers genuinely practice shura (consultation). Indeed, both Jabir Al-Sabah and Shaykh Zayid are considered relatively enlightened and "progressive" Arab nationalists. The rulers are not known to be familiar with one

or more foreign languages, except Qabus' working knowledge of English.

The inter-personal relations of the six rulers are not always as harmonious as reflected in their statements after each summit conference. Traditional rivalries, family and border disputes and personal conflicts define GCC inter-ruler relations. For example, there has been considerable dislike between the Al-Thani of Qatar and Al-Sabah of Kuwait; nor are Al-Thani ties with Al-Khalifa considered friendly. Shaykh Zayid does not "hate" the Sa'udis, although he does not trust them in political matters. Qabus and Zayid are not known to be too friendly, although Qabus is known to harbor intense dislike for the Sa'udis. Zayid's relations with Al-Sabah have cooled in recent years, while his relationships with Al-Thani have been marked by intense mutual jealousy. The rulers of Bahrain and Kuwait have cordial relations; however the relations between the Al-Sabah and Al-Saud families are not considered very warm. In contrast, Sa'udi relations with Al Thani and Al Khalifa⁵ have been cordial and even friendly.

The six foreign ministers that comprise the Ministerial Council constitute the second level of GCC's elite structure. The collective profile of the foreign ministers -- Ahmad Bin Sayf Al-Thani (Qatar); Ibn Mubarak Al-Khalifa (Bahrain); Rashid Abdallah (Abu Dhabi); Sa'ud al-Faysal (Sa'udi Arabia); Sabah al-Ahmad Al-Sabah (Kuwait) and Yusif al-Alawi (Oman) reflects some homogeneity. Most of these men are in their forties; on the average they are better educated than the rulers, with several holding college degrees. Except the Foreign ministers of Oman and U.A.E., the rest are members of the ruling

families. Virtually all have some degree of familiarity with English; Sa'ud al-Faysal stands out as the most highly educated foreign minister with an M.A. in Political Science. As a group, the Ministerial Council plays mostly an advisory role to the top six, and does not possess sufficient collective power to determine the course of the Supreme Council's decision-making.

General Secretariat: The Administrative Elite

Any genuine effort by the Gulf rulers to move toward a tighter confederal structure is likely to cause a substantial strengthening of the GCC Secretariat and its leadership. In the absence of a genuinely confederal union, the Secretariat remains an administrative organ which engages in planning, coordination and follow-up. Furthermore, the Secretariat is the hub of the complex and tortuous process of interstate negotiation, consensus making and conflict management.

The Secretariat is headquartered in Riyadh in deference to Sa'udi Arabia's primacy in the GCC. Secretary-General Abdallah Yusuf Bishara heads a staff of 300, most of whom are diplomatic and technocratic personnel. There is no institutionalized quota governing the recruitment of the Secretariat elite, although it is understood that some degree of member state representativeness is desirable. It appears that, in its present composition, the staff is not equitably representative of the member states. There exists an Omani concentration in the higher ranks, because of Oman's practice of nominating high-ranking officials for service in the Secretariat. The middle and lower levels are mostly populated by Bahraini and

Sa'udi bureaucrats. Significantly, there is a low level of representation from Kuwait, Qatar and the U.A.E. This is the direct consequence of two factors: 1) In contrast to the poorer Bahrainis, Omanis and Sa'udis, the affluent citizens of Kuwait, Qatar and U.A.E. are uninterested in government work, but prefer the promising opportunities of entrepreneurial life; 2) There has been a general reluctance among Kuwaiti, Qatari and U.A.E. citizens to settle in Riyadh because of its hard climate and the socially restrictive environment of the Sa'udi capital. Under these circumstances, it has been difficult to recruit civil servants from these states to serve the GCC, thereby reducing the integrative and representational potential of the Secretariat.

Two additional problems have impeded the Secretariat's work. With considerable justification, the staff has been criticized as being too large. In fact, it appears to be "bottom heavy"; many of the Secretariat's top positions have gone unfilled. Bishara is seconded by two Assistant Secretaries: Ibrahim al-Subhi of Oman in charge of the Directorate of Political Affairs; and Dr. Abdallah al-Quwayz of Sa'udi Arabia in charge of the Directorate of Economic Affairs. As of October 1983, the Assistant Secretaries for the remaining four directorates had not been appointed. Thus, the staffing process has not been completed. Reportedly most appointees are college graduates and members of the middle class.

The Secretary General

In the midst of GCC's semi-lethargic, formalistic and bureaucratic milieu stands Abdallah Yusuf Bishara -- an activist

Secretary-General by any standard. A Kuwaiti commoner of Iraqi Christian forebears, Bishara is placed at the confluence of opposing demands and pressures from the six member states. As a skillful diplomat of United Nations fame, Bishara has manifested substantial skills as negotiator, administrator and master of compromise. Gradually, Bishara has moderated his outspoken U.N. style to make himself more compatible with GCC's conservative and slow-paced milieu. However, he has succeeded in providing dynamic leadership as initiator of innovative programs and projects despite periodic public and private criticism of his actions and statements. Bishara's three-year term is due to expire in May 1984; he is likely to be reappointed for a second term as provided by GCC's rules.

VII. ESTABLISHMENT OF GCC: MOTIVES AND CATALYSTS

The establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council was prompted by certain powerful historical, political, strategic and socio-economic catalysts. It is necessary to identify these catalytic factors and relate them to the differential motivations of the member state for seeking cooperation. Consequently, it is important to distinguish and evaluate the variations between each member state's perceptions of the catalytic factors and the incentives of its leadership in joining the GCC. Four clusters of determinants militating toward GCC's establishment merit consideration.

External Security

The imperative of self-defense in an increasingly insecure regional and world environment can be considered the most influential factor in the decision to constitute the GCC. The enormous oil wealth of most GCC states, coupled with their manifest military weakness rendered them acutely vulnerable to external threats and dangers, particularly from less affluent and irredentist neighbors. Moreover, the strategic-economic centrality of the Gulf to the world's energy requirements dictates the maintenance of a secure environment to assure an uninterrupted flow of oil. During the last decade, five interrelated developments came to heighten the feelings of insecurity among GCC members. These multiple threat factors included:

1. The Islamic Revolution in Iran and its military and ideological threat potential.
2. The power vacuum created in the Gulf by the British withdrawal, the collapse of the Shah's regime and the weakening of Iraqi power.
3. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan and in the Marxist People's Republic of South Yemen.
4. The dramatic expansion of Israeli power and its projection into widening spheres of influence.
5. The uneasiness generated by the fluctuations of U.S. Middle East policy, particularly regarding U.S.-Israeli cooperation.

In combination, the foregoing factors were perceived by the Gulf rulers as threats to their very existence. The problem began with the British withdrawal and the Shah's assertion of a tenuous Iranian sphere of influence in the Gulf which was resented by the Arab Gulf States. The replacement of the Iranian monarchy by a Shi'ite fundamentalist order in 1979, transformed a limited threat into a revolutionary peril to the conservative Arab dynasties. Equally disconcerting were the Iraq-Iran war and the intrusion of Soviet power at two critical points on the Gulf's periphery: South Yemen and Afghanistan. This Marxist factor, coupled with the Iranian Revolution, constituted a double-barreled ideological-military threat to the Gulf countries. Nor was the U.S. prepared to field effective countermeasures to Iran and the Soviet Union. The American sponsorship of the Camp David Accords neutralized Egypt and led to an unprecedented expansion of Israeli power which was perceived by most Gulf States as rivaling Khomeini's Islamist threat. Any overt alignment between the U.S. and Arab regimes became politically unacceptable in view of popular opposition engendered by Israel's annexationist policies in the Golan and the West Bank, and attacks on

Iraq's atomic reactor and invasion of Lebanon. In addition, U.S. unwillingness or inability to prevent Israeli flights over Sa'udi air space seriously undermined the American position.

Internal Security

The necessity to promote internal security constitutes a primary catalyst for Gulf cooperation, only second in importance to external defense. A combination of external and internal factors have produced a crisis in the legitimacy of Arab rulers, particularly in the Gulf region. The conservative traditionalism of Arab Gulf rulers, and their dynastic framework of authority has been repeatedly challenged by Arab nationalist and Islamic fundamentalist elements. The arbitrary rule of some Gulf governments, their profligacy and Western ties makes them the natural targets of popular dissatisfaction. While opposition elements in the 1960's were mostly Arab nationalists, during the 1970's, Islamic fundamentalism emerged as a primary internal security threat. Sunni and Shi'ite fundamentalist movements are manifest in every Gulf state. The Ikhwan takeover of the Great Mosque in Mecca and Shi'ite unrest in the Eastern Province of Sa'udi Arabia (November-December 1979), dramatically symbolized the Islamist threat to the Kingdom. Another serious episode was the abortive Shi'ite plot to overthrow Bahrain's Sunni Al-Khalifa family in December 1981, reportedly with Iranian support.

Other sources of potential subversive activity are the large non-indigenous communities which constitute majorities in several Gulf states. These include Palestinians, Yemenis, Egyptians,

Lebanese, Sudanese, Syrians, Iraqis, Pakistanis, Persians and Indians, many of whom have been active in Islamic fundamentalist movements. The possible confluence of these non-native elements with native dissidents under the Islamist banner is likely to emerge as the single most potent internal threat to Gulf regimes in the 1980's.

Political Incentives

Beyond defense and internal security, there have been strong political incentives to promote Gulf cooperation. These incentives operate at two levels of activity: the international/regional level and the interstate level. The political incentive to seek mutual cooperation at the international/regional level centers on the quest for greater power and influence vis a vis other states. In view of their substantial wealth and land mass, the GCC states are likely to wield greater power collectively in international and regional arenas rather than individually. This is especially true of the five smaller members of the GCC, all of which possess small populations. In the international and regional contexts, a strong collectivity of Arab Gulf states could constitute:

1. A regional power capable of pursuing an active and weighty diplomatic role within the Afro-Asian bloc, and toward the industrialized states and the super powers.
2. A powerful Arab traditionalist bloc within the Islamic community of states which has come to rely on the Gulf rulers' financial largesse.
3. A counterweight in the Arab sphere representing a united front of conservative monarchies vis a vis the militant, left-leaning Arab autocracies, as well as Egypt and Jordan.

At a time of unprecedented disunity and conflict among the Arab states, and in the regional/international settings, the Gulf rulers

have found themselves relatively impotent in shaping events, particularly in the Arab and Middle Eastern environments. The Iraq-Iran war and the Arab-Israeli confrontation are cases in point. Hence, the motivation to effect an ingathering of efforts and resources for the common good.

The quest for Gulf cooperation was also prompted by the political imperatives of resolving interstate disputes. A variety of interstate conflicts have marked the history of the Gulf region; nor were these conflicts resolved under British rule and after independence. These include:

1. Boundary and continental shelf disputes involving all six GCC member states, particularly concerning oil fields.
2. Tribal conflicts which transcend state boundaries.
3. Dynastic enmity between the ruling families.
4. Conflicting types of political systems and internal policies ranging from quasi-democracy to royal absolutism.
5. Foreign policy differences.

In the face of an increasingly hostile regional environment, the Gulf states found it prudent to establish an institutionalized forum to resolve their numerous differences. Indeed, the imperatives of defense, and internal security were sufficiently potent to compel these states to seek mutual accommodation.

Socio-economic Incentives

The socio-economic factor was an important but not overwhelming catalyst in the GCC's establishment. During the last decade, the Gulf region experienced a developmental transformation of gigantic

proportions. The availability of oil wealth propelled these traditional states toward rapid and haphazard modernization. This created heavy technological dependence on the industrialized countries and mass infusion of non-natives to work as technicians and laborers. Moreover, some Gulf states have become competitors in oil production, finance and industrial development. These conflicts, coupled with differential levels of wealth and development, have exacerbated the tendency toward factionalism. Thus, the economic incentive to seek Gulf cooperation would require initiatives in four areas:

1. The establishment of complimentary developmental policies through comprehensive and mutually beneficial trade relationships.
2. The development of uniform policies on oil production, pricing and marketing.
3. The institution of joint policies to allocate investments at home and pursue financial interests world wide.
4. The coordination of policies on imported labor and modern technology.

Differential Motivations of GCC States.

The four clusters of motivational determinants-- external security, internal security, political incentives, and socio - economic needs -- were differentially perceived by the GCC states depending on their view of individual national interests. As states most exposed to the Iranian threat, Bahrain, and Oman were acutely concerned with defense. The relative lack of oil-generated wealth in Oman and Bahrain was instrumental in heightening their interest in economic cooperation. Internal security was a vital issue for Sa'udi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman, in view of their recent experience with

internal insurrections. In the case of Oman, the GCC provided a mechanism to reduce its isolation from the Arab world due to the ruling family's Ibadism and Western defense ties.

The socio-demographic dimension was significant to the indigenous Sunni Arab minorities of Qatar, Bahrain, and the U.A.E. which would become a part of the Sunni Arab indigenous majority within the GCC. As to Sa'udi Arabia, its regional and international role would be substantially enhanced as the natural leader of the Gulf states. Moreover, the Kingdom would be able to secure its eastern flank by preventing the emergence of revolutionary movements in the other Gulf states. In contrast, Kuwait was concerned with achieving balance in and around the Gulf by reducing great power competition. However, Kuwait's predominant interest within the GCC was economic cooperation, in contrast to Omani and Sa'udi strategic preoccupations.

VIII. GCC GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

An examination of GCC's activities since its inception in Spring 1981 reveals its specific objectives as a collective entity. These self-proclaimed goals reflect the clusters of motivational catalysts identified in the foregoing section. Thus, in setting its specific goals, the GCC has been responsive to the objective requirements of its members both in the domestic and regional settings. This congruence between objective needs and GCC's declared goals constituted an auspicious beginning for the organization. However, it is not at all certain whether the GCC will be able to achieve its goals in its present configuration. The GCC has set for itself five clusters of priority objectives:

1. Foreign Policy -- To coordinate and unify the foreign policies of the member states.
2. External Security -- To coordinate defense policies and strengthen military capabilities to prevent outside intervention.
3. Internal Security -- To coordinate action against subversive and criminal elements.
4. Economic Cooperation -- To promote regional development through integrated planning, investment policies and free trade relationships.
5. Social Cooperation -- To regulate foreign immigration, unify legal systems, remove visas, develop communication networks, promote mutual ties between citizens and coordinate educational systems. 1

After considerable planning and deliberation, the six states resolved to establish the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf-- Majlis al-Ta'awun Li-Duwal al-Khalij al-Arabiyyah. Since its inception, the members of the Council have been engaged in an

unprecedented flurry of activity of high level meetings, conferences, and consultations. The levels of interaction have ranged from periodic summit conferences to ministerial meetings and working sessions between technical specialists. The usual operative procedure is to discuss issues and prepare studies at the GCC Secretariat in Riyadh which are then referred to the appropriate ministerial committees. The result of interministerial deliberations are subsequently reported to the six heads of state who meet annually to take final decisions on major issues and discuss their differences. There have been a total of four summit conferences which have marked the stages of GCC's evolution. Abdallah Yusuf Bishara, GCC's Secretary General has characterized these evolutionary stages as follows:

1. Abu Dhabi (May 25, 1981) -- the Summit of establishment.
2. Riyadh (November 10, 1981) -- the Summit of consolidation, where the foundations of the GCC were reinforced .
3. Manama (November 9, 1982) -- the Summit of initiating implementation.
4. Doha (November 9, 1983) -- the Summit of initiating comprehensive change in political, military and security fields. 2

Throughout its two and a half year existence, GCC's activities have been conditioned by external and internal developments. The Council's response to these developments typically involves extensive consultations, eloquent rhetoric and possible action depending on circumstances. The rhetorical dimension is particularly important in understanding GCC's behavior. Official announcements by the Secretary-General, his assistants and member state leaders are often

designed to mislead outside observers by concealing important decisions or areas of disagreement. The innate conservatism of the member states and their cultural predisposition does not permit an effusive public posture. In this connection, Secretary Bishara's hyperbolic statement is instructive: "The GCC is following a quiet plan, characterized by healthy quietness."³

A chronological analysis of GCC's activities reveals its responses to changes in the political environment in terms of the formulation of goals. In its first year, the Council was confronted with the escalating Iran-Iraq war and Iranian attempts to export the Islamic revolution as exemplified by the abortive coup in Bahrain (December 1981). These developments prompted emphasis on external and internal security rather than economic and social cooperation. Consequently, Bishara's statement in May 1981, that economics would receive priority over politics, could not be taken at face value. In fact, external and internal events forced the GCC states to preoccupy themselves with the question of security, although with limited success. However, in the absence of solid progress, particularly in the area of external security, the GCC succeeded in increasing socio-economic cooperation between its members, along with some degree of amelioration of certain interstate disputes.

GCC's unstable external milieu persisted during 1982 which was marked by Iranian victories at the warfront and Israel's invasion of Lebanon. A conclusive Iranian victory would have serious military and political consequences for GCC, while the Israeli action in Lebanon could radicalize the Arab world and produce an outbreak of Palestinian and Islamist militancy directed at pro-American Arab

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rulers. The GCC reacted to these developments by quietly supporting Iraq while pressing for a settlement of the Iraq-Iran war by making repeated overtures to Iran which were vehemently rejected. On Lebanon, the GCC called for a prompt Israeli withdrawal and reemphasized its strong support for Palestinian rights. The extrication of Palestinian forces from Beirut was considered a salutary development since it would limit the possible emergence of a vengeance factor against Arab regimes. Meanwhile, the GCC began to search for a modality to normalize its relations with post-Sadat Egypt. Nor was 1983 a propitious year for the stability of the Gulf's periphery. The continuation of the war between Iran and Iraq, and GCC's failure to modify Iran's determination to defeat Iraq underlined the Council's military impotence and vulnerability. Equally serious, was the impact of the growing American-Syrian confrontation in Lebanon. Despite its muted misgivings toward Syrian policy, the GCC could not refrain from supporting the Asad regime's defiance of Israel and the U.S. which enjoyed grass-roots support among Arab nationalists.

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IX. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF GCC'S ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Any assessment of GCC's effectiveness as a transnational organization would necessitate a comparative analysis contrasting its declared and ostensible objectives and actual achievements. Despite their interrelated nature, GCC's main objectives will be analyzed under five separate headings to sharpen the focus of the evaluative process.

Foreign Policy

Secretary Bishara's arduous efforts to achieve a foreign policy consensus were not always successful. The specific areas of foreign policy agreement included:

1. Opposition to the Israeli presence in Lebanon and the West Bank.
2. Opposition to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and South Yemen.
3. Opposition to the Brezhnev proposal to convene an international conference to neutralize the Gulf unless such an effort covers Afghanistan and South Yemen.
4. Support of the Fahd plan to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The foregoing issues represented a rough consensus thereby concealing significant variations in the individual policies of member states toward these issues. For example, opposition to Israel has been most vehement in Kuwait and the U.A.E. in sharp contrast to Oman. The same is true of the Soviet presence in South Yemen and Afghanistan. Furthermore, Kuwait has been favorably disposed toward the Brezhnev proposal to neutralize the Gulf as opposed to Oman and

Sa'udi Arabia. More than any other issue, the Fahd plan drew unanimous support from all GCC members. Yet, behind the veneer of artificial entente lay a series of major foreign policy differences which defied consensus. One such issue was the Iran-Iraq war.

While all six states decided to maintain diplomatic ties with Iran, it proved impossible to achieve unanimity on a collective position. In the Third GCC Summit, Kuwait and U.A.E. firmly opposed taking a collective stand against Iran.¹ However, there existed muted agreement within the GCC about the desirability of balancing Iraq and Iran against each other. This attitude can be summed up as follows:

"They were apprehensive first of Iraq pushing too far into Iran and now, with the Iranians gaining an edge, they are worried about Iran pushing too far into Iraq. The clear ascendancy of either creates panic here. 2

Other areas of foreign policy disagreements involved Egypt, Syria, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Oman's increasingly close ties with Egypt did not lead to a normalization of GCC-Egyptian relations. Despite unofficial contacts, most Gulf states have been reluctant to reestablish ties with the Mubarak government in view of Islamist and nationalist opposition to that regime and its ties to Israel and the United States. Similar ambiguities surrounded GCC's attitudes toward Hafiz al-Asad. The proposal, supported by Kuwait, to cut-off financial aid to Syria was not approved³ by the GCC ministerial council meeting in Riyadh in March 1982. While the members opposed Syria's pro-Iranian stand and repression of Islamic fundamentalists, they were not prepared to arouse Syrian enmity and the likelihood of increased Syrian reliance on the Soviet Union. However, it was GCC's posture toward the United States and the Soviet

Union which generated major disagreements centering on the larger issues of regional security to be treated in the next section.

External Security

There has been substantial agreement among GCC members on the need to secure the Gulf against foreign intervention. Indeed, the maintenance of the free flow of oil constitutes the primary imperative for all GCC states. In Secretary Bishara's view, the preferred solution is to keep out foreign powers from the Gulf region and to assume responsibility for its defense. Moreover, GCC's statements have repeatedly emphasized self reliance on security matters within a framework of nonalignment. Yet, there is no consensus on nonalignment within the GCC except on the rhetorical level.

With respect to the Soviet Union, there has been great suspicion in recent years because of the Soviet position in Afghanistan and South Yemen. Most articulate among the states is Oman which experienced the Soviet-supported Dhufar rebellion during the 1960's. Equally strenuous is the Sa'udi opposition to the Soviet Union which, however, has been deliberately subdued in recent years. Instead, the Sa'udis have signaled their good intentions to the Soviets through mutual friends such as Indian Prime Minister Gandhi. However, the Kingdom does not seem to consider it politically propitious to establish formal ties with the Soviet Union at this juncture; nor has it encouraged Kuwaiti suggestions to GCC members regarding the desirability of diplomatic ties with U.S.S.R. On Soviet bloc issues, Qatar, Bahrain and to a lesser extent the Emirates, follow the Sa'udi

lead; Kuwait has pursued an independent course since it established diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union in 1963. Yet, GCC's generally anti-Soviet stance does not negate the ostensible wish of most Gulf states for a Soviet countervailing influence to the American presence in the region. It is instructive to note Secretary Bishara's statement that the GCC is not opposed to Soviet support of the Syrians and Palestinians. Furthermore, Bishara has refused to rule⁴ out eventual diplomatic ties between the GCC and the Soviet Union.

There is no doubt that all GCC members are more favorably disposed toward the U.S. than the Soviet Union. In their "heart of hearts" GCC rulers reluctantly realize that in a major regional conflict threatening their existence, there may be no substitute for American power. Such threats could come from Iran, Iraq or the Soviet Union, as well as from insurrectionary elements on the domestic front. Yet few Gulf states are prepared to flout their relations with the United States with the single exception of Oman. Even the Sa'udis have frequently used the rhetoric of nonalignment despite their existing security relationships with the United States. Information Minister Abdu Yamani has expressed Sa'udi opposition to Western forces and bases in the Gulf region and has rejected foreign custodianship and alliances. Foreign Minister Sa'ud al-Faysal has added that "Gulf security must be based on the strategic capabilities of the region, not on outside military⁵ intervention.

The persistent difficulties involving the conclusion of a military defense pact is directly related to the significant differences among the member states concerning their relations with

the United States. The expanding U.S. role in Oman and Sa'udi Arabia has undermined GCC's declarations of nonalignment. As early as mid-1981 Kuwait was reported to refuse participation in a GCC military pact as long as foreign bases existed on the territory of any member state.⁶ Moreover, the GCC denied reports about an agreement on a common air defense system based on AWACS. Similarly, Omani efforts to associate the GCC with the Western defense system have not been productive.⁷

Indeed, the Kuwait-Oman confrontation has become a persistent feature of GCC's secret deliberations.⁸ For example, the foreign ministerial meeting of March 10, 1981 found Kuwait and Oman at loggerheads on foreign and defense policy. The Kuwaiti foreign minister criticized Oman's close relations with Egypt and the U.S. as being unacceptable to Kuwait's National Assembly. The Omani foreign minister retorted that the Sultanate's Egyptian and American policies had been pursued after "consultation" with Sa'udi Arabia. Foreign Minister Qays al-Zawawi subtly reminded his colleagues that Oman's security arrangements with the United States on military facilities was public knowledge, while other GCC members had made similar agreements under the guise of secrecy. Clearly, Zawawi was referring to American strategic ties with Bahrain and Sa'udi Arabia.

The difficulties of developing a strategic consensus toward the United States were also implicit in the Secretary-General's statements and the press criticism that they frequently generated. In July 1981, Bishara expressed accurately the Arab attitudes of frustration toward the United States. He found American treatment of the Arab world "humiliating and insulting". Bishara went on to

oppose Western protection of the Gulf, specifically the Rapid Deployment Force, since this would bring a Soviet response. Instead, the Secretary emphasized GCC's policy of "Gulfanization" of defense and suggested that Omani efforts to seek Western protection would be tempered once the problem of South Yemen is resolved.⁹

Six months later, the Secretary's remarks bore a more conciliatory attitude toward the United States. After affirming GCC's rejection of military bases and its commitment to nonalignment, Bishara went on to justify the U.S. military presence in Oman since GCC needed time to find alternative defense arrangements. He also spoke about an "accidental convergence of GCC and U.S. interests" which however did not mean that "we should throw ourselves in the lap of the U.S."¹⁰

These remarks, combined with Bishara's assertion that foreign immigration into the Gulf was a greater threat than Zionism, evoked vehement criticism from U.A.E. leaders and Gulf newspapers.¹¹

The Kuwaiti National Assembly requested that Bishara resign from his position.¹² The Secretary seems to have been unfazed by these attacks in view of his past record as a staunch supporter of the Palestinian cause while serving as Kuwait's ambassador to the United Nations. In fact, during a press conference in February 1982, he used neutral terminology regarding the Rapid Deployment Force in deference to Defense Secretary Weinberger's visit which concerned U.S. willingness to establish a Gulf arms industry.

A month later, in an apparent response to his critics, the irrefragable Secretary theorized about the three Arab diseases: "fragmentation, disunity, and partisanship, all of which should be avoided by the GCC."¹³

By all indications, the problem of external security continued to occupy the GCC leadership throughout 1982, without yielding a solution that satisfied the member states. The GCC defense Ministers' meeting of January 2, 1982, in Riyadh yielded the usual statements about nonalignment and self reliance in defense. Prince Sultan, the Sa'udi Defense Minister, even asserted that the GCC "is not a regional alliance and is not directed against anyone".¹⁴

During February and March 1982, attention was turned to the procurement of weapons. The Bahraini Crown Prince and Defense Minister spoke in favor of diversification of arms purchases to "avoid blackmail".¹⁵ In sharp contrast, Oman stressed "the need for unified strategy to arm the Gulf states", as well as the unification of the sources of arms.¹⁶ However, the disagreement on strategies for weapons procurement was accompanied by a common wish to develop a Gulf war industry to achieve some degree of self sufficiency.¹⁷ This was a principal agenda item discussed by GCC chiefs of staff in Riyadh on March 16, 1982. Another salient topic was the establishment of a joint military force. Two military committees were formed to extend help to Bahrain and Oman--GCC's most vulnerable members vis a vis Iran. Meanwhile, it became increasingly apparent that Sa'udi Arabia was assuming the leading role in defense matters within GCC. In typical Sa'udi fashion, this assumption of defense primacy was effected tactfully and discreetly. Indeed, this is a natural role for Sa'udi Arabia which is accepted as primus inter pares--first among equals. In terms of land area, population, oil wealth and contiguity to other GCC members, Sa'udi Arabia enjoys an unequalled position of geo-political and economic leadership. The

increasing Sa'udi prominence in security matters was underlined by the establishment of a naval college open to all GCC citizens and renewed expressions of readiness to give AWACS to GCC.¹⁸ Sa'udi Defense Minister, Prince Sultan, has become the Council's leading spokesman on defense matters.

Despite the best efforts of Sa'udi Arabia, GCC's defense ministers were unable to agree on a security arrangement during their meeting of October 1982, in Riyadh.¹⁹ Thus, GCC's third Summit Conference decided to postpone endorsing a definitive security treaty. However, during these meetings, there were clear signs of coalescence on the security issue. Even Kuwait showed support for some form of military cooperation in the face of the continuing Iranian threat. Meanwhile, the U.A.E. and Bahrain emphasized the need to diversify the sources of arms procurement which implied a reluctance to rely solely on American made weaponry.

Defense matters continued to occupy the GCC during 1983. There were discussions on joint military exercises, military industrialization, and a uniform defense strategy.²⁰ Meanwhile, Kuwait reasserted its independence by buying French F1 Minages and troop carriers and declaring its opposition to R.D.F. In June 1983, the GCC decided to hold joint military exercises during October that would involve ground troupes-- possibly the nucleus of GCC's own rapid deployment force.²¹ However, it is clear that Sa'udi hopes of tightening GCC's defense structure have been partly dashed. It appears that several GCC states will continue to maintain freedom in military planning and decision-making.²² During October 1983, the planned military maneuvers were held in Abu Dhabi. Under the code

name Dir' al-Jazirah--Shield of the Peninsula--the joint exercises²³ included small contingents of ground troops from each GCC state. Meanwhile, there was no agreement on the joint funding and procurement of arms.

Arms Procurement Policies

The difficulties impeding agreement on unified arms procurement policies, are both political and economic. The political obstacles involve the divergent foreign policies and strategic orientations of the GCC states. Oman wants to buy American weapons with GCC funds. To some extent, the same can be said about Bahrain. However, Kuwait has no desire to finance American arm sales to Oman and Bahrain. An equally fundamental question is the profit imperative. Oman wants GCC funds to buy U.S. weaponry through its own business agents to maximize the financial profits accruing from these sales. Similarly, the other GCC states wish to conclude their own arms purchases through indigenous business establishments to reap financial benefits from commissions. Thus, the profit motive militates against unified GCC policies on the standardization of arms and joint procurement from common sources. In view of this financial imperative, it is unlikely that the GCC will succeed in developing and implementing unified weapons procurement policies except in limited areas as a symbolic gesture.

Intensification of GCC Disagreements--1983

A number of developments during 1983 reflected the general lack of GCC consensus on major foreign policy and defense issues. At one

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end of the spectrum was Sultan Qabus concerned with the threat to
Hormuz from Iran and the Soviet Union.²⁴ At the other end was
Shaykh Zayid of the Emirates, acutely interested in settling the
Iran-Iraq war. In October 1983, Zayid proposed a plan to be
submitted to the fourth Summit Conference. The Zayid plan called for
a three-step procedure: 1) Cease fire; 2) Implementation of a Gulf
plan to finance and rebuild Iraq and Iran; 3) Establishment of a
committee to fix responsibilities for the initiation of the Iran-Iraq
war and to decide on compensation for the injured parties.²⁵ In
all probability, Oman and Sa'udi Arabia were opposed to the Zayid
plan in contrast to possible support from Kuwait and Bahrain.

Internal Security

Cooperation on internal security has been a priority item on
GCC's agenda which may even transcend the imperatives of foreign
policy and external security. Fostering genuine cooperation on the
internal front requires the amelioration of major problems between
the member states as well as coordination of their internal
policies. One major interstate dispute concerned Bahrain and Qatar
centering on their conflicting claims to Hawar Island and the
adjoining continental shelf boundaries. In March 1982, the GCC
prevailed upon the two antagonists to freeze the dispute and
initiated a process of mediation through GCC's Commission on The
Settlement of Disputes.²⁶ Another significant achievement was the
Kuwaiti-Sa'udi agreement on the Neutral Zone in July 1982. Finally,
the GCC made a good start toward mediating the protracted

confrontation between Oman and South Yemen. In attempting to resolve this external dispute, the Council was hoping to achieve two important goals: 1) To draw South Yemen away from the Soviet Union, thereby reducing the Soviet presence in the area and 2) To reduce Omani reliance on the United States once the ideological-security threat from South Yemen had been moderated. The mediation effort led by Kuwait and the U.A.E. appeared to show considerable promise as Oman and South Yemen agreed to soften their propaganda warfare and establish diplomatic relations in October 1983. However, a long term rapprochement may be elusive in view of the ideological polarization between monarchical Oman and Marxist Yemen, reinforced by the continuing military presence of the two super powers in the respective countries.²⁷ The remaining territorial conflicts between U.A.E. and Oman and U.A.E.-Qatar-Saudi Arabia have not been confronted by the GCC because they lack urgency.

In view of the increasing amity between the Gulf rulers and their determination to protect themselves from internal enemies, the GCC has registered some progress in the area of internal security. Indeed, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism made internal security a major issue throughout the Gulf, particularly after the Great Mosque episode and Shi'ite unrest in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. The abortive coup in Bahrain (December 1981), was especially instrumental²⁸ in creating a sense of urgency on internal security. Secretary Bishara spoke about "a security umbrella...linking internal security forces with military and political institutions," in order to keep²⁹ the Gulf independent of foreign influences. In February 1982, the GCC interior ministers held their first conference in Riyadh,

where Sa'udi Interior Minister Prince Nayif declared that any encroachment on the sovereignty of a member state would receive a collective response from the GCC.³⁰ The interior ministers agreed on a comprehensive security framework and left the "details" to be worked out in their October 1982 meeting. However, these details proved to be serious impediments. According to the Kuwaiti Interior Minister, all matters pertaining to security cooperation with Sa'udi Arabia had been resolved. However, he also spoke of "a legal difference in views" concerning the exchange and extradition of criminals between the two states.³¹ Indeed, Kuwait's laws, in contrast to Sa'udi Arabia's, did not permit extradition--a manifestation of Kuwait's limited democracy and self chosen role of protector of Arab nationalist, Islamist and leftist dissidents.

Kuwait's reluctance was not shared by Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain which moved to conclude in April 1982 agreements of security cooperation and extradition with Sa'udi Arabia. Meanwhile, at their meeting of October 1982, GCC interior ministers endorsed the recommendation presented by a panel of experts regarding the establishment of a security information center. The Secretariat was empowered to implement this decision.³² However, the proposal for a joint security agreement was once again postponed to be studied by specialists. The text of a Draft Security Agreement was reviewed but not approved by the Third GCC Summit held in Bahrain (November 9-11, 1982). It consisted of thirty-nine articles on a plethora of controversial subjects:

- * Abstaining from giving refuge to criminals and opponents of GCC regimes.
- * Banning the publication of materials directed against GCC regimes.

- * Prevention of citizens of each country from interfering in the affairs of other countries.
- * Regularization of consultations between interior ministries and unification of laws on emigration, passports, residency and nationality.
- * Combating of infiltrators and agreement on modalities of their pursuit across boundaries.
- * The exchange of information on ex-convicts and suspects.
- * Extradition of criminals and subversive elements. 33

The foregoing summary reflects the authoritarian and restrictive nature of the Draft Security Agreement which bears the imprint of GCC's most conservative members; hence Kuwait's reluctance to endorse the whole document. Nor is the U.A.E. inclined to implement the extradition clauses of the agreement (chapter III, article 2). As the weakest links in GCC's chain, Qatar and Bahrain could not resist Sa'udi pressures to conclude bilateral security treaties with the Kingdom. Both are expected to implement the joint security agreement upon its approval by the GCC. Oman is expected to conform to the security agreement in view of the Sultan's desire to neutralize his expatriate enemies spread throughout the Gulf. Indeed, the drafters of the security agreement appear to have paid no attention to the political realities of the Gulf. The extradition clause is likely to prove troublesome for every GCC member, including Sa'udi Arabia, since its strict implementation would ultimately involve dissident elites as follows:

- * Dissident Al-Thani family members living in U.A.E.
- * Dissident Al-Khalifa members living in Qatar
- * Omani Imam al-Harithi and other dissidents living in Sa'udi Arabia.
- * Sa'udi notables and dissidents scattered around the Gulf.
- * Islamist, Arab nationalist, and leftist leaders of every coloration living in Kuwait.

Opponents describe the bilateral security agreements and GCC's Draft Security Agreement as the means to establish a "big jail" to encompass the whole GCC region. Equally serious are the implications of the clause permitting interpenetration of borders for hot pursuit of criminals, which affects the territorial sovereignty of GCC members. This concerns the right to penetrate up to twenty miles into an adjoining state to apprehend criminal elements. In view of Sa'udi Arabia's contiguity to other member states and its large territorial expanse, the Kingdom will be least affected by the twenty mile provision, while the territories of smaller GCC states will be under easy Sa'udi surveillance. In view of these problems, it is unlikely that the joint security agreement will be fully implemented even if it receives unanimous GCC approval.

Economic Cooperation

More than any other aspect of GCC activity, the economic sector has shown considerable vitality. As early as June 1981, GCC's finance ministers reached a Draft Economic Agreement designed to replace all existing bilateral, economic accords among GCC states. The Draft Agreement was taken up by GCC's foreign ministerial meeting in September 1981 as Secretary Bishara referred to the GCC as "the economic backbone of the Arab world."³⁴ He proceeded to call for an "economic fusion" of the member states. The Draft was further considered by GCC's Second Summit in Riyadh (November 1981); it was finally approved by the Third Summit in November 1982. Meanwhile, specialized ministerial committees met to coordinate the various economic sectors. These included the ministers of industry,

petroleum, planning, finance and housing. Particularly significant was the evident cooperation in the petroleum sector. In February 1982, GCC oil ministers met to discuss united measures against possible opponents, stockpiling of refined products, and establishing oil-related enterprises in Bahrain and Oman -- GCC's two relatively oil poor members.³⁵

It was decided that the GCC would provide the energy needs of any member state, which for any reason, is unable to produce oil.³⁶ Also, the oil ministers led by Sa'udi Arabia's Shaykh Yamani, began to consider a series of important proposals:

- * Coordination among national oil companies
- * Joint petroleum enterprises
- * Unification of conditons governing oil contracts
- * Oil pollution
- * Importation of water by tankers
- * Protection of oil price levels
- * A pipeline through Oman

By early 1983, the oil ministers began to operate like a cartel within OPEC despite their statements to the contrary. In an emergency meeting (January 1983), the ministers decided not to reduce oil prices despite Omani pressure, only to reverse themselves a month later.³⁷

Two conflictual issues arose to cloud GCC's cooperative efforts during 1982. The first concerned the plan to circumvent Hormuz by extending a pipeline to Oman. This was opposed by Kuwait and possibly by the Emirates since it would exacerbate Iranian animosity toward the GCC and reinforce Oman's strategic position. The second issue involved U.A.E.'s denial of commercial licenses to Kuwaitis who had been too enterprising in their activities in the Emirates. Kuwaiti newspapers criticized the U.A.E. for going against the GCC trend of economic cooperation.³⁸ On the positive side, Bahrain expressed satisfaction with the ties between its public sector and

Kuwait's private sector. In May 1982, GCC Economic Undersecretary Dr. Abdallah al-Quwaiz announced the initiation of steps in joint economic planning, a survey of basic and industrial materials to determine each state's industrial potential and a study to impose uniform customs duties on imports. In his remarks, Dr. Quwaiz favorably compared the GCC with the EEC, although he called the latter too complex and competitive. However, a private Kuwaiti study produced a negative assessment of GCC's prospects of economic integration.³⁹

The tempo of economic cooperation quickened with the approach of GCC's Third Summit Conference which finally approved the economic agreement effective March 1, 1983. Simultaneously, the GCC established the Gulf Investment Organization with a capital of \$2.1 billion for the purpose of encouraging industrialization.⁴⁰ However, it was unclear as to how seriously the economic agreement would be implemented; soon after the Summit meeting, Oman requested to be excluded from the agreement for one year. The Economic Agreement consisted of twenty-eight articles covering a variety of salient issues:

- * Exemption from customs duties on all agricultural, animal, industrial and natural resource products.
- * Unification of customs tariffs for imports.
- * Provision of all necessary facilities for the transit of goods.
- * Coordination of the member states' commercial policies and relations with other nations, in order to maximize the bargaining power of each state.
- * Encouragement of joint ventures between the private sectors of GCC states.
- * Coordination of development plans to attain economic integration.

- * Coordination of policies in all phases of the oil industry and development of common oil policies vis a vis the outside world and within international agencies.
- * Coordination of industrial activities and formulation of uniform industrial laws and regulations.
- * Fostering technical cooperation to promote applied research in science and technology in keeping with the diverse needs of the member states.
- * Encouragement and coordination of educational programs at all levels to promote economic development.
- * Coordination of manpower policies on the basis of uniform vocational and professional standards.
- * The treatment of all GCC citizens by all states on an equal basis with respect to providing land, air and maritime transit, including the use of seaports and airports.
- * The formulation of common laws and regulations on investments.
- * Coordination of fiscal, monetary and banking policies and the establishment of a common currency.
- * Coordination of foreign economic policies with regard to granting financial assistance to international organizations.
- * Consideration of developmental disparities between member states in the implementation of this economic agreement including temporary exemptions granted by the Supreme Council of the GCC. 41

As a first step the foregoing economic agreement is a significant achievement depending on the extent to which the member states are prepared to implement its provisions. While the agreement is designed to supercede local laws and regulations, much will depend on the commitment of national and subordinate elites to the ideal of economic integration. If past experience is a guide, the economic agreement is likely to fail if it threatens the financial interests of the ruling families and their powerful clients. The implementation of the agreement began in March in the midst of

ambitious economic plans and activities. It is too early to judge its economic and social effectiveness.

Social Cooperation

The formation of the GCC has also engendered a significant degree of cooperation along a wide spectrum of interstate ties and activities. This has been particularly true of the cultural and educational domains. There has been a push for streamlining educational and professional qualifications to achieve uniformity. The meeting of officials from the ministries of Information and Culture in October 1982 in Abu Dhabi proposed the unification and integration of mass media "to liberate Arab media from the influence of the Western media."⁴² Such endeavors of cultural fundamentalism would be salutary had it not been for proposals to institute a unified press and publication law. Kuwait and possibly the U.A.E. are likely to resist the adoption of uniform publication laws, since these would be tantamount to state censorship. However, efforts have continued to coordinate news agency services and to join the international satellite network. Another important area of cooperation concerns labor policies. The efficient control of the flow of manpower within GCC states is a vital concern to prevent manpower shortages or unemployment, and to keep a check on the size and activities of non-indigenous communities. Also, there have been proposals to unify postal services and broadcasting frequencies. A major ecological concern during 1982-83 was the massive oil slick resulting from Iraqi bombing of Iranian oilfields. This brought a coordinated GCC response despite half-hearted cooperation from Iraq and Iran.⁴³

Clearly, the social dimension has been assigned a low priority on GCC's agenda when compared with the primacy of political, military and economic issues. In the long range however, the profusion of social and economic ties between the citizens of the member states is likely to be GCC's most abiding integrative achievement.

Native Reactions to the GCC

There has been considerable criticism of the GCC, its organization and policies. The criticism has emanated from the discussions among Gulf intellectuals appearing in Kuwait's and U.A.E.'s relatively free press, as well as from books and underground pamphlets. During early 1981, the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Qabas published a lengthy series of interviews with professors, bureaucrats and businessmen.⁴⁴ Professor Muhammad al-Rumaihi stressed the need to promote social justice and political participation as a means to achieve internal and regional stability. Dr. Muhammad Rashid al-Fil, proposed that food and military strength were the essentials of Gulf security. He emphasized the need for popular cooperation and participation through elected bodies to build a strong base for GCC's unity. The need for popular participation was also emphasized by 'Isa Majid al-Shahin, a Kuwaiti diplomat, while professor Wadid Mubarak identified the external factors which are likely to shape GCC's evolution. Abd al-Muhsin Taqi Muzaffar expressed the fear that GCC could become a security alliance without social or economic content, and that it would represent Gulf rulers rather than peoples. Some of these writers also pointed to the desirability of Iraqi membership in the GCC.⁴⁵ In a recent study, Professor al-Rumaihi has presented a more comprehensive examination of the GCC

identifying the critical problems facing its members. Rumaihi points to the serious difficulties faced by Arab and non-Arab communities working in the Gulf as well as the absolutist nature of the Sa'udi and Omani regimes.⁴⁶ There is no doubt that the critical attitude expressed by Rumaihi and his Kuwaiti colleagues are shared by a significant portion of the Gulf intelligensia including high-level government officials, businessmen and professionals. These attitudes were reflected in a secret memorandum that was to be presented to GCC Heads of State at their Fourth Summit Conference in Doha, Qatar, November 9, 1983. Authored by a half dozen prominent political leaders from Qatar, U.A.E. Kuwait and Bahrain, this memorandum included an enlightened criticism of the GCC and the ruling families. It emphasized the need to focus on the popular base to promote education, health, communication and freedom, instead trying to concentrate all power in the ruling families. The distinguished authors forcefully asserted: "You cannot educate the people and ignore them"; they called for a return to the shura -- the Islamic practice of consultative democracy.⁴⁷ The consideration of the proposal was postponed for next years summit conference.

GCC's severest critics were the Islamic fundamentalists and leftist nationalists; both saw GCC as an ingathering of six ruling families for the sole purpose of perpetuating their power and maximizing their financial interests. The fundamentalist attack centered on the GCC rulers' individual and collective lack of Islamic legitimacy because of failure to implement the principles of genuine shura (popular consultation).⁴⁸ A related target of Islamist attack was the reluctance of GCC states to permit the comprehensive

applicaiton of the shari'a (Islamic Law) in the areas of education,⁴⁹ information, culture, justice and economics. In foreign and defense policy, the fundamentalists called for GCC's observance of "strict neutrality" toward the Soviet Union and the U.S. and the Iran-Iraq war; nor were the Islamists prepared to accept the⁵⁰ Omani-American agreement on military bases. More devastating was the criticism of shi'ite Arab fundamentalists who regarded the GCC as lacking internal cohesion and representing the interests of Western⁵¹ imperialism.

The Arab nationalist-leftist attack on GCC was even more vehement than that of the Islamists. GCC's establishment was viewed as a veiled Sa'udi Arabian attempt to assert its hegemony over the Gulf states and the region as a whole as "Big Brother" (shaqiq al-akbar).⁵² Thus, from the nationalist point of view, the reported insurrectionary attempt in Bahrain was a Sa'udi fabrication to be used as a pretext to sign security agreements with Bahrain and Oman and the initiation of a GCC-wide intelligence organization -- Mukhabarat al-Khalij -- with connections to Western intelligence⁵³ services.

A more moderate view is expressed by Abdallah al-Nafisi in a far ranging analysis. Nafisi diagnoses GCC's outstanding problems as follows:

1. Economic subservience to the capitalist world.
2. Ideological and policy differences between Gulf rulers.
3. Close strategic relationships with the U.S.
4. Demographic imbalance.
5. Maldistribution of wealth.
6. Border disputes.
7. Lack of popular participation in politics.

Nafizi observes that the only effective solution to the Gulf's problems is through genuine political liberalization -- infisah siyasi haqiqi. To him, the only sure way of containing political opposition is not through mutual security pacts but through the institution of fundamental reforms including:

1. Right to personal security.
2. Right to employment security.
3. Right to social justice.
4. Right to political association.

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Nafizi's eloquent critique concerning the necessity of political liberalization to achieve Gulf stability possesses considerable validity. At present the GCC appears to enjoy little grass-roots and elite support, since it is designed to reinforce the dominant political culture of non-participation. Thus, GCC's lack of social foundations does not augur well for its future.

X. ASSESSMENT OF MEMBER STATE CAPABILITIES TO MEET GCC PURPOSES

The six member states exhibit a wide range of divergencies in resources and capabilities in terms of: geographical area; population size; military power; wealth; leadership potential and political will. These six categories can be used to evaluate the potential of each state to participate in GCC activities and meet its objectives.

Sa'udi Arabia

The Kingdom brings to the Council substantial resources and some liabilities. Sa'udi Arabia's massive area provides the GCC with strategic depth; and its relatively large armed forces and modern arms could form the backbone of any future GCC joint defense system. Also, the monarchy's great wealth and oil resources could contribute to the economic wellbeing of the poor GCC members -- Oman and Bahrain -- and bring to GCC great international prestige and influence. Nor is Sa'udi Arabia's relatively large native population unimportant to the maintenance of demographic balance with respect to the non-indigenous majorities in several GCC states. However, these strengths may not offset the potential liabilities implicit in the Kingdom's leadership role and political will. On a number of issues requiring explicit Sa'udi leadership, the Kingdom has manifested insufficient political will and followed its traditional practice of pursuing its policies through clients like Bahrain and Qatar. Equally serious, are the possible consequences of Sa'udi policies for

the GCC, particularly the tendency to impose the Kingdom's restrictive domestic policies on other GCC members. The adoption of such policies by the GCC as outlined in the proposed internal security agreement, is likely to obviate any possibility of popular support for the GCC and its ruling dynasts. The Kingdom's restrictive domestic scene does not constitute a desirable product of export to the more liberal Gulf states. Despite repeated promises to institute shura in the wake of every major internal crisis, the Sa'udi regime has persisted in upholding its policies of feudal absolutism.

Kuwait

Kuwait's actual and potential contributions to the GCC are considerable. These include substantial wealth, financial expertise, experienced leadership, and political acumen. Moreover, Kuwait's internal policies of benevolent and guided liberalism offer a promising long-term alternative to secure domestic stability in the Gulf states. However, Kuwait's modest size, small population and military weakness preclude its assumption of leadership primacy in the GCC. In the foreseeable future, Kuwait is expected to continue its balancing role vis a vis Sa'udi Arabia and Oman in GCC's external and internal policies.

The United Arab Emirates

The Federation brings to GCC great wealth, some geographical depth and a degree of enlightened leadership. However, the tenuous nature of its federal structure betrays U.A.E.'s internal weaknesses and decreases its propensity of becoming a model for the GCC to

emulate in its future stages of evolution. Under Shaykh Zayid, the U.A.E. has worked for moderation within the Supreme Council and has been instrumental in achieving consensus. However, its border conflicts with Oman, Qatar and Sa'udi Arabia may complicate GCC's task of achieving interstate tranquility.

Oman

The potential contribution of Oman to GCC include strategic location and population. The Sultanate controls the southern approaches to Hormuz; it also possesses a relatively poor population, a part of which is employed by other GCC states including U.A.E's armed forces. However, Oman also brings to the Council certain major liabilities centering on the recalcitrant personality of Sultan Qabus and his generally unpopular security ties to the United States and Britain. The Ibadi affiliation of the Sultan and the majority of his subjects isolates them from the dominant Sunnis of the other GCC members.

Bahrain

This small island-state is poor in oil resources and military power. It's contributions to the GCC include trained manpower and a flexible socio-economic setting which has made it the Gulf's financial and entertainment center. Economically, Bahrain is heavily dependent on Sa'udi Arabia and Kuwait. Its territorial conflict with Qatar has been a major GCC issue in the Council's deliberations. In addition, Bahrain's Shi'ite majority and Iran's claim to the Island

make it a potential liability to the GCC in the areas of external and internal security.

Qatar

Qatar possesses the smallest population among the Gulf states which is compensated by its considerable oil wealth and strategic location. Within the GCC, Qatar usually follows the Sa'udi line and is dependent on the Kingdom for its defense. Aside from its disputes with Bahrain and Abu Dhabi, Qatar has not played a significant role in GCC decision-making.

XI. DEGREE OF CONGRUENCE BETWEEN STATE INTERESTS AND GCC OBJECTIVES

It would be misleading to speak about the 'national' interests of GCC states, but rather about the dynastic interests of the ruling families. Thus, the GCC is regarded as a means through which its constituent dynasties seek to realize their individual interests. All six dynasties share the common imperatives of self preservation and self enrichment. However, they differ widely on the means to achieve these ends. A case in point is the policy differences between Kuwait and Oman. While the Al-Sabah perceive the preservation of their self-interest in terms of an overall balance in the Arab, Middle Eastern and global spheres, Sultan Qabus seeks protection through strategic ties to the West. Substantially different is Sa'udi Arabia's perception of its self interest. In the ruling princes' view, Sa'udi self-preservation is dependent on the establishment of a closely knit block (kutlah) of GCC states over which the Kingdom could exercise comprehensive, if discreet hegemony, -- a position to be reinforced by a muted economic and strategic American connection. The problem is that none of the five lesser GCC states are prepared to accept Sa'udi dominance, although Qatar and Bahrain tolerate it to some degree because of their multiple vulnerabilities. Even Bahrain has sought to counterbalance its Sa'udi connection by forging close ties with Kuwait. Another area of divergent dynastic interests is internal policy. Kuwait and the U.A.E. seek to promote dynastic self-preservation by pursuing somewhat liberal and flexible policies to rule their heterogeneous

societies. Bahraini efforts to follow this pattern has been aborted by internal Shi'ite unrest, Iranian threats and Sa'udi pressures favoring conservatism. The imperative of basing dynastic preservation on autocratic rule is one of the main areas of congruence between Omani and Sa'udi Arabian policy. Finally, the GCC states assess their interests differently vis a vis Iran and the Arab world. Kuwait and the U.A.E., in contrast to Sa'udi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman are less disposed to pursue policies of confrontation toward Iran. Also, the U.A.E. has been less supportive of Iraq than other GCC members. Equally important, is the relationship between divergent views of individual interests in the Arab sphere. Oman stands alone among GCC members in its expression of lukewarm support for the Palestinian cause. In contrast, Kuwait, the U.A.E. and even Bahrain and Qatar have stayed in the mainstream of Arab nationalism, while Sa'udi Arabia is careful to lace its Arab policy with Islamic themes. Thus, all GCC dynasties except Oman, perceive a congruence between their self interest and overall support for the Arab cause, particularly the Palestinian problem.

In view of the foregoing conflicting perceptions of dynastic self interest, it is important to discover the extent of congruence between these interests and GCC's objectives. At the most general level, individual state interests appear to be well served by GCC in its present configuration. Indeed, no GCC state can be opposed to the Council's overall objectives of promoting external and internal security, socio-economic cooperation and foreign policy consensus. However, incongruence sets in when specific policies are pursued and implemented. In each case, congruence or incongruence between state

interests and GCC objectives depend on the content and tenor of specific GCC policies. For example, on the question of internal security, the restrictive content of the Draft Security Agreement reflected Sa'udi and Omani perceptions of self interest which were rejected by Kuwait and the U.A.E., since this was not congruous with their views of reality. Nor was the Economic Agreement seen by Oman as being in its best interest. On the other hand, Omani pressure to establish an explicit U.S.-GCC security linkage was opposed chiefly by Kuwait and to a lesser extent by the other GCC states.

These problems will become exacerbated should the Council decide to move from cooperation to integration during the next several years. In other words, any evolution toward a tighter and viable confederal structure will require greater congruence between state interests and GCC objectives. At the present time, it appears that Sa'udi Arabia, more than any other member, has profited from the Council. Indeed, the GCC has accorded the Sa'udis a platform of regional leadership as well as the organizational means to interfere and influence her junior partners. In fact, the Kingdom has had little to lose, and much to gain from its GCC membership.

XII. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GCC AND TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

As a regional grouping, the GCC possesses many of the attitudes of intergovernmental and transnational organizations which have proliferated since World War II. A comparative analysis of GCC with other intergovernmental organizations will reveal the range of similarities and differences in terms of structure, objectives, effectiveness and potential modalities of evolution.

Intergovernmental organizations (IGO's) are usually classified functionally or geographically.¹ Functional categories include: security alliances; economic associations; political groups; and socio-cultural organizations.

Table 3

CLASSIFICATION OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Security	Economic	Political	Socio-cultural
NATO	Common Market	Arab League	UNESCO
Warsaw Pact	OPEC	OAU	Islamic Conference
OAU	OAPEC	OAS	Arab League
	COMECON	Islamic Conference	
	British Cmwltth.	British Cmwltth.	
		OAPEC	

As depicted in Table 3, four functional categories subsume a variety of IGO's. While NATO and the Warsaw Pact are purely military alliances, the Organization of African Unity(OAU) is a regional political association with some features of a security alliance. On the other hand, the European Common Market, OPEC and OAPEC mainly serve economic functions, while the British Commonwealth of Nations

has both economic and political dimensions of a loose nature. As to the Arab League, it is both a political and socio-cultural IGO. Similarly, the Islamic Conference, as a religious IGO, would be placed under the socio-cultural rubric; yet in recent years the Conference has also assumed some political attributes.

The comparative analysis of the GCC within the framework presented in Table 3, reveals significant insights. In its inception, GCC's creators emphasized its economic and socio-cultural functions; soon, however, the Council also began to assume political and internal and external security functions. Indeed, during the second year of its existence, the GCC was endeavoring to become a functionally comprehensive regional organization. It sought to become, however imperfectly, a military alliance, an economic association, a political community and a socio-cultural union, all at once. It is precisely this attempt at comprehensiveness which makes the GCC unique among the 300-odd major and minor IGO's of the world. Nevertheless, this quest for comprehensiveness immeasurably increases GCC's decisional tasks and compounds the chances of failure.

In addition to categorizing the GCC in terms of functional criteria, it is necessary to introduce another taxonomic variable -- the degree of integration. Thus far, the integrative dimension of GCC has been minimally effective. Instead of integration, GCC has stressed 'cooperation' and 'coordination'. To the extent that the member states consult, cooperate and coordinate, they constitute a political community. The GCC is also a socio-cultural community, par excellence, because the native populations of the member states

share a common cultural identity based on the Arab-tribal-Islamic ethos. Yet the GCC, despite its rhetoric, has not become an effective security community or economic grouping, since such IGO's require a substantial degree of interstate cooperation and integration. In the security field, the GCC lacks the integration that characterizes alliances like NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Similarly, in the economic realm, the GCC lacks the organizational strength and integration of the European Common Market. On the other hand, the GCC is a more cohesive and viable political and socio-cultural IGO than the British Commonwealth of Nations, the Islamic Conference and even the Arab League.

XIII. ASSESSMENT OF OUTSIDE REACTIONS TO GCC

In view of its collective political, strategic and economic objectives, the GCC has generated considerable interest among regional and outside powers. The reactions expressed by outsiders have ranged from support to neutrality to manifest hostility.

Iranian Reactions to GCC

The most important regional power is Iran, due to its geographical proximity to GCC and the revolutionary and irredentist orientation of its Islamic regime. Indeed, the Iranian reaction to the GCC assumes special significance precisely because the threat of the Islamic Revolution was a primary catalyst in prompting the Gulf states to organize the GCC. Consequently, Iranian policy toward the GCC and its member states deserves special consideration.

In general, Iranian policy toward GCC have been a combination of intimidation and accommodation. Iranian statements of intimidation have ranged from downgrading the Council to outright threats to blockade the Strait of Hormuz. Meanwhile, Iran has given repeated assurances of non-intervention in the internal affairs of GCC States. Since the establishment of GCC in 1981, there has been a general hardening of Iranian rhetoric in response to developments within Iran and the GCC. Iran's relatively mild reaction during most of 1981, appears to have been due to: 1) The internal conflict among the revolutionary factions and; 2) The expectation that GCC would not become a serious military and economic threat to Iran. However,

three moves by GCC members in late 1981 and early 1982, prompted a sharp and direct reaction from Iran: 1) The conclusion of bilateral security pacts between Sa'udi Arabia and Bahrain, and Sa'udi Arabia and Qatar; 2) The decision of GCC ministers of defense to work toward a collective security pact; 3) The increasing level of GCC economic aid to IRAQ. These steps were viewed by the Islamic Republic as directed mainly against its interest.

A detailed examination of Iranian pronouncements reveals two levels of response: 1) Statements directed at the GCC as a collective entity; and 2) Statements directed at GCC member states reflecting various degrees of opposition and tolerance. The ebb-and-flow of Iranian attitudes toward the GCC can be seen in the Foreign Ministry statements and the specific pronouncements of Khomeini and other top leaders. In March 1981, the Foreign Ministry accused the U.S. and the West for creating fear and suspicion in the Gulf. It emphasized that the Gulf's defense was the responsibility of local governments; it also guaranteed free passage through the Strait of Hormuz.¹ Another declaration by Prime Minister Rajai stated that the Gulf should be recognized by its historical name -- Persian Gulf -- rather than the "Arab Gulf" -- an appellation often used by the Arabs.² This was followed by a bombing attack on Kuwaiti oil fields on in late - 1981, although Iran disclaimed responsibility for the action. Iran also denied Bahraini and Sa'udi charges of complicity in a plot to overthrow the Bahraini government in December 1981. The first major Iranian reaction to the Council came in late January 1982 in response to the meeting of GCC defense ministers in Riyadh to discuss the problem of collective security. The Iranian foreign Minister Ali

Akbar Velayati stated that the security pact was being formulated under American influence and that in a war the Gulf states would be hurt more than Iran because of their dependence on oil. Velayati emphasized that the Gulf states:

"Should not forget that Iran is the largest and strongest country in the region and we possess the longest shores along the Persian Gulf. If a security pact is signed among the Gulf states ignoring Iran, it would be like burying one's head in the sand and inattentive to reality." 3

Similar warnings were issued by President Khamanei and Speaker Rafsanjani. The latter welcomed cooperation among Muslim states as long as they did not conspire against the Islamic Republic. One major theme of Iranian response was the perceived connection between the GCC and American policy in the Gulf. This was manifested in President Khamanei's strong reaction to the visit of U.S. Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger in March 1982 to Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Oman. Khamanei warned that this visit was not in the interest of the Gulf countries and expressed regret at their indifference to U.S. military expansionism in the area.⁴ This was followed by Rafsanjani's warning that if the Gulf states made Iran angry, the passage of oil through Hormuz will be blocked.

During the rest of 1982, Iranian commentary began to focus on GCC support for Iraq in its war effort against Iran. The Iranian aim was to reduce the level of financial assistance to Iraq from the GCC states. On April 1, 1982, Khomeini asked that the Arab states refrain from aiding Iraq and denied Iranian intentions to overthrow the Gulf regimes.⁵ Meanwhile, the Iranian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs visited the U.A.E. where he declared that the GCC poses a direct threat to Iran.⁶ Yet, the main focus of Iranian

policy continued to be the Iraq-Iran war. In reaction to the May 1982 meeting of GCC ministers, Khomeini stated that the Gulf states had become tools in the hands of the big powers in support of Iraq. He proceeded to reinforce the misgivings of the Gulf rulers toward Saddam Husayn's regional ambitions. Furthermore, the Ayatallah pledged his support to the Gulf states, "if these countries do not assist Saddam, if they treat us according to the Quran and do the same with other nations." These stern warnings, coupled with Iranian victories at the war front, seem to have induced the GCC foreign ministers to declare the group's neutrality in the Iraq-Iran war (May 31, 1982). The Iranian diplomatic pressure persisted throughout 1982, as Iran assumed an offensive posture on the war front. President Khamenei observed that the establishment of the Council without Iran was unrealistic and that Iraq constituted more of a threat to the Gulf states than Iran. On July 5, 1982, Khomeini took up the propaganda offensive, by equating support to Saddam Husayn with the betrayal of Islam. The Ayatallah threatened to deal severely with the countries supporting Iraq, while expressing Iran's willingness to have "brotherly" relations with the Gulf states. Similar warnings were sounded by President Khamenei who proceeded to reassure the Gulf states that Iran's victories over Iraq need not threaten their security.

A lower level of Iranian criticism characterized the first half of 1983. A notable exception was speaker Rafsanjani's charge that Sa' 'i Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and the U.A.E. had committed a "crime against Islam" by reducing the price of oil from \$35 to \$29 a barrel. He chastized the GCC members for defending Western interests

and warned that Iran "will seek revenge."¹¹ The relative calm in Iranian-GCC relations was shattered by the Council's decision during July 1983, to hold its first military maneuvers in October 1983. In an apparent response to this decision, Prime Minister Musavi stated that despite Iran's efforts to seek friendship, the porkhor (piggish)¹² rulers of the Gulf states- enjoy serving the United States. A more pointed condemnation (August 1983) by Khomeini was directed at Saudi Arabia. The Ayatollah castigated the Saudi's for preventing Iranian pilgrims from visiting Mecca and called Saudi Arabia an "American slave".¹³ The rhetorical confrontation intensified during September 1983 when Iran threatened to disrupt oil shipments in response to Saddam Husayn's threat to attack Iranian oil installations with Super Etendard bombers. Admiral Malik Zadeh, commander of the Iranian naval forces in the Gulf, reiterated Iran's right to intervene in the Gulf region. Referring to the GCC, the Admiral stated that no conference is legitimate without Iranian participation, and that U.S. military maneuvers were "a heart warming effort for the corrupt leaders of the Gulf."¹⁴ On September 19, 1983, Rafsanjani summarized the Iranian position:

The key to the Persian Gulf is in our hands. If the Gulf is going to be secure, it should be secure for all of us and, if not, it will be insecure for all of us. I am warning the corrupt countries of the region to be attentive to their interests and the interests of the region." ¹⁵

Iranian Policies Toward GCC Member States

In contrast to its general antagonism to the GCC, the Islamic Republic has manifested differential policies toward specific GCC states, ranging from overt hostility to relative tolerance. Three categories of Iranian attitudes are discernible. At one end of the

spectrum are Sa'udi Arabia, Bahrain and Qatar which are the targets of intense and persistent criticism. The middle ranges of the spectrum are occupied by Oman and Kuwait which have been the object of less frequent criticism. The U.A.E. has stood alone in receiving relatively friendly treatment from Iran. In view of their centrality to Gulf affairs, the specific relations of each GCC member to Iran need to be explored in some detail.

United Arab Emirates

This composite state of seven shaykhdoms has had a relatively normal relationship with Islamic Iran. The reason can be found in the unique nature of this loose federal state, in sharp contrast to the unitary governments of the other five GCC states. Historically, there had been close ties between Dubai and monarchical Iran stemming from Shaykh Maktum's policy of making his emirate a major center of Gulf commerce with the help of a large community of Iranian expatriates. This Iranian 'connection' accorded the Shaykh a significant degree of independence within the federation and the larger Gulf arena. Dubai's Iranian connection survived the Islamic Revolution, and became a conduit for the normalization of U.A.E.-Iranian relations. Despite the rivalry between Shaykhs Maktum and Zayid, the latter does not seem to have opposed the normalization of ties with Iran. There have been continuous visits to the U.A.E. by Iranian representatives throughout 1981-1983. According to Iranian reports, the two sides have discussed the issues of economic cooperation, combating Israel, and preserving regional security. In June 1982, the U.A.E. declared its neutrality in the Iran-Iraq

war. This was followed by the visit of a high official from the Iranian Foreign Ministry who called U.A.E.'s stand "wise and realistic" and carried a special letter from Ayatallah Khomeini to Shaykh Zayid.¹⁷ A similar visit took place in August 1983, underlining the continuing amity between the two states. The normalization of political relations has been reinforced by expanding trade which is reported to include daily shipments from Dubai to Bandar Abbas.¹⁸

Oman

The Iran-Oman relationship is both complex and peculiar. During the last three years, Sultan Qabus has pursued several lines of policy which are considered detrimental to Iranian interests. Yet, the Iranian response was restrained until the second half of 1983, mainly due to economic reasons. Indeed, this relationship clearly reflects Iran's willingness to subsume ideology to economic necessity.

The ideological antagonism between Iran's Twelver Shi'ites and Oman's Ibadi rulers goes back to the assassination of the Caliph Ali by the Khawarij of which Ibadism is a branch. Also, Khomeini had little regard for Sultan Qabus, the Shah's earthswile ally. Nor did Iran welcome Oman's willingness to provide the United States with military bases. Moreover, Qabus' proposals for a GCC pipeline to Oman to reduce the strategic importance of Hormuz were considered detrimental to Iranian interests. Yet, it was Oman, along with the U.A.E. which allowed the use of its territory as points of transshipment of goods to Iran during the West's economic

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boycott. Hence, the paucity of Iranian criticism of Oman during 1981 and most of 1982. However, in October 1982, Oman recalled its representative from Iran for unexplained reasons. Recent Iranian threats to close the Strait of Hormuz have brought expressions of concern from Oman's leaders. In August 1983, an Iranian vice minister criticised Oman indirectly for helping the expansion of American military influence in the Gulf under the guise of regional security.
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Kuwait

Iranian-Kuwaiti relations have been generally remote and subdued. The most important determinant of the relationship has been Kuwait's substantial financial assistance to Iraq, since the onset of the Iran-Iraq war. A reported Iranian attack on Kuwaiti oil installations in October 1981 was repeatedly denied by the Islamic Republic.
21
Despite this denial, the Iranian press was highly critical of Kuwait's military and economic aid to Iraq in the aftermath of the bombing incident. Kuwait was also criticised for
22
its alleged collaboration with pro-Shah elements. During 1983, Kuwait was not a frequent target of criticism except when mentioned along with other GCC states. Iran seems to approve Kuwait's desire for nonalignment and its stressful relations with Iraq.

Qatar

the Iranian perception, Qatar seems to be the least important GCC state. Its name is hardly mentioned in Iranian statements, except in association with other GCC states, especially Sa'udi Arabia

and OPEC. Indeed, Qatar is viewed by the Islamic Republic as a mere extension of Sa'udi Arabia, an obedient emulator of its policies.

Bahrain

The discordant state of Iran's relations with Bahrain goes back to the pre-revolutionary period. The Shah's claim to Bahrain has been replaced by the attempts of the Islamic Republic to foment unrest on the island. Bahrain's vulnerability to Iranian subversion stems from the island's Sh'ite majority of Persians and Arabs who are ruled by the sunni Al-Khalifa family. In December 1981, Bahrain accused Iran of attempting to overthrow the regime of Shaykh 'Isa Al-Khalifa during Bahrain's national day celebrations. The government arrested over sixty members of the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain. Reportedly, the plotters had been trained by Ayatallah Hadi al-Mudarrisi in Iran -- a cleric who had been expelled from the Island earlier for subversive activities. Shortly after this event, Bahrain concluded a security pact with Sa'udi Arabia. In response, President Khamanei denied Iranian involvement in the abortive coup and accused Bahrain of conspiring against Iran.²³ The Bahraini fear of Iran has made Shaykh Al-Khalifa an active proponent of defense and internal security cooperation within the GCC.

Sa'udi Arabia

More than any GCC state, Sa'udi Arabia has been blatantly anti-Iranian. In return the leaders of the Islamic Republic have rarely missed the opportunity to criticise the Sa'udi Monarchy.

Thus, what had been a muted conflict between the Shah and Sa'udi Arabia has evolved into open enmity under Khomeini. The intensity of the Iranian antagonism stems from ideological, strategic and economic reasons. The Sunni Wahhabism of Sa'udi Arabia and the Shi'ite fundamentalism of Iran represent opposing ideological currents within Islam. This conflict is reinforced by Khomeini's unrelenting opposition to Islamic monarchical rule. Nor is Iran prepared to tolerate Sa'udi Arabia's leading role among the Arabs and its close strategic ties to the United States and the West. Moreover, Sa'udi wealth and profligacy make it a natural target for the puritanically inclined Iranian clerical leadership. Finally, the large-scale financial and military assistance given to Iraq has rendered the Sa'udi Kingdom a prime enemy of Iran, only second to Iraq.

A main arena of Sa'udi-Iranian conflict has been the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj). Iranian pilgrims have repeatedly clashed with Sa'udi police who have attempted to prevent political demonstrations during the pilgrimage directed at Israel and Western imperialism. The Sa'udi position that the hajj is a purely religious undertaking has been countered by Iranian insistence that politics and religion are inseparable in Islam. Despite Sa'udi restrictions, the Iranians once again resorted to demonstrations during the pilgrimage ceremonies of 1983 which led to clashes with Sa'udi authorities. The Iranian view of the hajj was summarized by Ayatallah Musavi Khoeni: " After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, hajj has ceased to be a boring and tiring event. With guidance from our great Imam, it has turned into a global congress for the Islamic world."

The Sa'udi fear of Iran stems from the latter's propensity to inspire and assist fundamentalist insurrectionary movements within Sa'udi Arabia and the Gulf region. Equally threatening is the possibility of an Iranian breakthrough on the Iraqi front, which would leave the Kingdom in a precarious situation both externally and with respect to domestic Islamist enemies. Hence, the leadership role assumed by Sa'udi Arabia within the GCC, particularly in security affairs.

In conclusion, the Iranian regime has not welcomed the GCC despite Khomeini's repeated calls of unity between Islamic states. Khomeini and other Iranian leaders view the Council as:

1. A means to facilitate and legitimize U.S. intervention in the region.
2. A mechanism to support Iraq in the war with Iran, and
3. A threat to Iran and to the spread of Islamic fundamentalism in the region.

In his speeches directed at the Arab world, Khomeini makes no distinction between Sunnis and Shi'ites; nor does he identify the GCC rulers as Sunnis, but rather as corrupt anti-Islamic followers of America. In many of his statements, the Ayatallah has repeatedly cautioned the GCC states not to assist Iraq, since the latter's victory in the war would be detrimental to the Arab monarchies of the Gulf. In his acutely shrewd rhetoric, Khomeini has often declared that Saddam Husayn would seek territorial gains in Sa'udi Arabia and Kuwait should he succeed in defeating Iran. The pronouncements of high Iranian officials follow the basic tone set by Khomeini. While the Ayatallah's words are crude, blunt and full of Islamic terminology, Khamenei and Rafsanjani use more subtle and diplomatic

rhetoric. At least in one instance, there have been divergent views expressed by two top Iranian clerics. While Ayatallah Montazeri attacked the GCC during February 1982, Hujjat al-Islam Rafsanjani raised no objection to the Council as long as it did not serve
25
American interests.

There seems to have been a change in Iranian policy toward the GCC during the Fall of 1983. Repeated Iranian threats to close the Strait of Hormuz gave way to more cautious pronouncements during October 1983 as a possible consequence of American warnings and the sobering realization that the blockage of Hormuz would also hurt Iran's economy. Meanwhile, Iranian propaganda assumed a more aggressive tone of intimidation, increasingly directed at the GCC rather than its individual member states. It appears that, by late 1983, Iran had come to regard the GCC as a collective threat to its interests. The reported discovery of an Iranian plot to blow up the conference center at Doha, Qatar, during the November meeting of GCC rulers, was instrumental in heightening the ongoing confrontation
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between Iran and the Gulf Arab states.

Iraqi Reactions to GCC

As the second major Gulf power after Iran, Ba'thi Iraq is a primary concern for GCC and its member states. During the mid-1970's, Iraq had begun to assert itself in Arab affairs under Saddam Husayn, who styled himself as the Arab "protector" of the Gulf states against Iran. The simultaneous application of Iranian and Iraqi pressure upon the weak Gulf states had circumscribed the scope of their independent action until the onset of the Islamic Revolution

and the Iraq-Iran war. Indeed, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, for the Gulf states to form the GCC, had it not been for the Iranian and Iraqi distraction with the Islamic Revolution and the Iraq-Iran war. Significantly, GCC's establishment was announced almost eight months after the war's start, prompting an unfavorable Iraqi response. In July 1981, Saddam Husayn explicitly criticized the GCC for excluding Iraq at a time when "Iraq fights Iran on your behalf..."²⁷ Soon, however, the Iraqi opposition became muted as the Ba'thi government came to rely on massive GCC financial and military assistance to fight a prolonged war with Iran. To soften Saddam Husayn's bitterness, the GCC has included Iraqi representation in some of its deliberations and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have moved to resolve their outstanding issues with Iraq. Once Iraq extricates itself from the war, it is expected to press for GCC membership, or at least a special relationship with the Council.

The Yemens

The two Yemens present a special case because of their geographical and cultural proximity to GCC. The preliminary discussions regarding Gulf cooperation conducted during the late-1970's, indicated a willingness to include North Yemen (Yemen Arab Republic). Its eventual exclusion from GCC in 1981, reflected the reluctance of some ruling families to tolerate in their midst North Yemen's republican regime. North Yemen's sectarian instability, ties to South Yemen, and potential for subversion through its large labor force dispersed in the Gulf states, were additional factors for its exclusion. However, North Yemen has

supported GCC, because of its heavy economic and military dependence on the wealthy Council members. In sharp contrast, the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen has opposed the GCC because of the Western ties of several of its members. As a Marxist republic with security ties to the Soviet Union, South Yemen's anti GCC orientation is only natural. The specific target of South Yemeni propaganda has been the Sultanate of Oman which had suppressed the Dhufar rebellion in the 1970's -- an insurgency supported by South Yemen. It was no mere accident that the Oman - South Yemen conflict became a priority item on GCC's agenda. As a consequence of GCC mediation conducted by the U.A.E. and Kuwait, Oman and South Yemen established diplomatic relations in 1983. Consequently, South Yemen has moderated its opposition to the GCC which has begun to provide substantial economic aid in an effort to draw the Marxist state away from its Soviet moorings.

The Arab States

Arab reactions to the GCC have ranged from strong opposition to qualified or full support. Libya's Qadhafi stands alone as a persistent opponent of the Council, although he has maintained ties with most of its members. The monarchical regimes of Morocco and Jordan have praised the GCC for ideological and economic reasons. Because of its proximity to the GCC and cultural similarity to the tribal monarchies, Jordan has maintained close economic and security relations with Oman, the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia. Also supportive are Lebanon and the Sudan as the beneficiaries of GCC largesse; Lebanon also relies on GCC for mediation between its warring

factions. Syria constitutes a special case of an Arab nationalist regime facing Israel--a posture which has prompted GCC economic support on a large scale. Therefore, Syrian support for GCC has been conditioned by the amount of economic aid given by each Council member. Proposals to cut-off aid to the Asad regime because of its repressive treatment of the Muslim Brotherhood have been repeatedly shelved by the Council in view of its reluctance to evoke Syrian enmity. Other Arab regimes--Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt--are generally supportive of the GCC, although the Council has refused to reestablish ties with Egypt because of popular opposition to the Camp David Accords. However, several GCC members have acknowledged Egypt's friendly overtures through Oman and other parties and there have been increasing unofficial contacts since Sadat's assassination. There has been some fear in the Arab world that GCC's establishment will further fractionalize the Arab League and isolate the rich Gulf region from the Arab mainstream.

States of the Periphery

The important states of the Gulf's periphery are Pakistan, India, Somalia, Ethiopia, Greece and Turkey. In view of its important security ties and economic dependence on GCC states, Pakistan has been a staunch supporter of Gulf cooperation; India has followed suit for the same reasons. Somalian and Ethiopian attitudes toward GCC are shaped by their ongoing confrontation in the Ogaden desert and ties to the super powers. Somalia relies on GCC assistance against pro-Soviet Ethiopia, which also faces a rebellion in Eritrea supported by some GCC states. Despite their mutual antagonism, Turkey

and Greece have been favorably disposed toward the GCC. The Turkish attitudes have been mainly determined by economic need; Greece's relations with the Gulf and the Arab world have intensified in recent years due to Prime Minister Papandreou's pro-Palestinian orientation. In addition, Greece enjoys extensive commercial relations with GCC states.

Europe and the Super Powers

The GCC was greeted with considerable enthusiasm by most West European States, particularly Britain and France. To the extent that the GCC could maintain Gulf stability, it would be welcome in high European councils interested in the free flow of Gulf oil, capital and business. However, the European powers would be opposed to an American-led GCC, since this would negatively affect their important economic stakes in the region. These European attitudes are also shared by Japan, in view of its extensive economic dependence on the Gulf as an affluent market and source of oil. Indeed, there has always been a heightened sense of competition in the Gulf between the industrialized powers which has produced antagonistic relationships among such political allies as the United States, Japan, Britain, France and West Germany,.

Soviet and American attitudes toward the GCC have been diametrically opposed as they reflect their respective positions around the Gulf. The ideological and political opposition of most GCC states toward the Soviet Union and their security and economic ties with the West have prompted Soviet criticism of the Council. The Soviet press has asserted that the GCC is motivated by military

concerns linked to Western security. In response, Kuwait has assured the Soviet Union about the primacy of GCC's economic priorities over its strategic plans. The Soviet reaction has been to propose the neutralization of the Gulf area which has been opposed by Kuwait's GCC partners and the Western powers. Only Kuwait has been moderately receptive to the Soviet proposal. In sharp contrast, the United States has defined the Gulf as a vital area of strategic concern and has pledged to defend its security against regional and external threats. To this end, the United States has organized the Rapid Deployment Force -- Al-Quwwah al-Tadakhkhul al-Sari' -- as a means to defend the Gulf in cooperation with GCC states, some of which have been lukewarm toward American intentions. However, U.S. policy has been strongly supportive of GCC activities particularly in the fields of defense and arms procurement. Other expressions of support for GCC have come from Yugoslavia, Mauritania, the Peoples Republic of China and the Palestinian Al-Fatah organization.

XIV. GCC'S FUTURE GOALS

The prognostication of GCC's future goals requires three types of inquiry: 1) Trend analysis; 2) Impact assessment of events; and 3) Evaluation of ostensible goals. Trend analysis tends to maximize the probability that past and present trends in GCC policy and organization are likely to continue in the immediate future. From this perspective, the GCC is likely to remain a loose cooperative arrangement, perpetually seeking consensus and incremental change. In such a projection, the current slow pace of economic cooperation is likely to continue, in addition to limited regional defense coordination and some internal security cooperation. The major area of integrative change will be the socio-cultural field as a direct consequence of increasing contacts between GCC citizens. In time, this social integration and homogenization may provide a firmer foundation for a close-knit confederal or even federal structure of GCC states.

The foregoing analysis of trends does not account for the differential impact of external and internal events on GCC decision-making. Four possible sources of events may exercise powerful formative influences on the GCC -- the Iran-Iraq war; the Arab-Israeli conflict; the Soviet-American rivalry; and internal insurrectionary activities in the Arab sphere and within the GCC orbit. Major conflictual developments in the foregoing crisis settings are likely to bring the GCC members together in search of a more integrated framework of genuine unity. Yet, there will be no guarantee that any of the foregoing developments will propel the GCC

in a pro-American direction. The growth of Soviet influence in the region may prompt a more united GCC to seek a long-term modus vivendi with the U.S.S.R.

Another method to analyze GCC's future goals is to prod behind the flowery rhetoric of the Council to identify its deeper consensus and priority objectives. A content analysis of GCC statements indicates a curious divergence of themes and shifts of rhetorical emphasis. A case in point is GCC's glossy brochure published on the occasion of its second anniversary -- May 25, 1983. Among the stated "aims" of the Council, there is no mention of defense or internal security. Only in Secretary Bishara's "Message" there is mention of "defense cooperation" as the "third track" of GCC goals, which is merely "supportive rather than fundamental, protective rather than the backbone."¹

Another "supportive", "protective" and "auxiliary" factor is internal "security complementarity", which is assigned the "fourth track" in GCC's priorities. In Bishara's conceptualization, the internal security and defense factors are designed to support GCC's priority objectives -- political coordination and economic integration. Despite the Secretary's expressed order of priorities, the GCC spent an inordinate amount of time on the twin issues of external and internal security during 1982 and 1983. Bishara's stress on the "economic backbone", as an overwhelming GCC priority, should not obscure the Council's preoccupation with the defense and internal security issues. Yet, by all indications economic and social cooperation may prove easier to achieve than genuine external and internal security cooperation since these areas require greater mutual thrust and delegation of sovereign power than economic and social affairs.

XV. ASSESSMENT OF GCC POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP & PURSUE UNIFIED POLICIES

The future effectiveness of GCC to generate and implement unified policies is likely to depend on four factors:

1. The degree of success achieved since GCC's establishment.
2. The frequency and magnitude of external and internal threats as perceived by the member states.
3. The socialization and attitudes of the next generation of young leaders who will assume power after the mid-1980's.
4. The extent to which the GCC leadership proves capable of inducing the member states to sacrifice their ephemeral interests to the collective good.

The Success Factor

In its third year of operation, the GCC can not be declared either an unqualified success or a complete failure. It should not be forgotten that the GCC is basically an experiment, a first step toward regional cooperation. Most of the ruling dynasts did not intend it to become a tightly integrated federal state, since they were not prepared to abandon their prerogatives of rulership and sovereignty. When measured against the rulers' limited aims, GCC's achievements can be safely considered a partial success. Above all the GCC has provided a mechanism of continuous consultation and limited joint action. Moreover, in a region of traditional political culture, the GCC has institutionalized modern processes of consultation, the systematic analysis of socio-political problems and

the modalities of cross-national cooperation. The basic patterns of interstate cooperation have been established. In this sense, GCC has had a relatively auspicious beginning; although in this nascent stage it is unable to develop unified policies on a wide range of major issues.

The Threat Factor

The magnification of external and/or internal threats is likely to induce the GCC rulers to seek greater organizational cohesion and integration, particularly in the defense and internal security areas. In view of the continuing likelihood of internal and external threats to GCC member states, they can be expected to persist in their cooperative efforts with greater urgency. Thus, conditions of protracted crisis are likely to contribute to the development and implementation of unified GCC policies, particularly in the areas of external and internal security and arms procurement.

New Elites

The next decade shall see the emergence of a new generation of leaders in the GCC countries. The fate of the GCC and the policies of its constituent units will depend, to a significant extent, on the world view of these new elites formed in the socializational milieu of major crisis and disruptive influences: The Arab-Israeli conflict; the Iranian Revolution; the rise of Islamic fundamentalism; the crises of Arab identity; the impact of modernization; oil induced affluence and superpower rivalries. As the products of this crisis

environment, the Gulf States' new leaders are likely to possess:

1. A higher level of education than their predecessors.
2. A deeper sense of Arab and Islamic identity.
3. A more enlightened view of social and political realities.
4. A lower propensity for profligacy and corruption.
5. A greater sense of the imperatives of Gulf cooperation.
6. A stronger determination to develop indigenous resources and potentialities.

In sum, the new Gulf elites are expected to be better qualified for the tasks of leadership than the present cotery of mostly traditionalist powerholders. However, their quest for Gulf unity and chances of success as rulers will be conditioned by a plethora of mostly unforeseen socio-political variables.

GCC's Integrative Role

The prospects for effective and unified GCC policies shall also depend on the capabilities of the GCC elite--the Secretary General and his staff. Ultimately, their task is to induce the member states to sacrifice their narrow interests for the collective good, which involves some transfer of power and responsibility to the Secretariat. There is no evidence that such transfers of power have begun to take place in the GCC. However, there may be some possibility that with the passage of time, the GCC Secretariat will become gradually strengthened through incremental transfers of administrative and advisory powers, and thereby assume an organizational dynamic of its own to generate and implement unified policies.

XVI. GCC'S POTENTIAL AS A MAJOR ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC FACTOR

The prognostication of GCC's potential to become a major economic and strategic entity is likely to be conditioned by several dynamic factors. One cluster of factors, as identified in the Section XV, centers on GCC's early successes, the incidence of crises, the impact of new elites, and the capabilities of the Secretariat staff. Beyond these requisites, it is possible to discern at least four determinants which are likely to condition GCC's future role:

The Oil Factor

GCC's political and economic destiny will be decisively affected by the matrix of changing economic and financial opportunities as determined by the oil market. A continuing glut or a world depression will sharply reduce GCC incomes and decrease the Gulf states' economic centrality and strategic importance. The opposite scenario will place these states once again at the apogee of their power and influence.

The Cultural Dimension

Economic wealth and power constitute the necessary but not the sufficient conditions to make the GCC a major economic and strategic factor. The prime requisite is the imperative of cultural change--the degree to which the GCC will be able to induce its indigenous

citizenry--al-muwatin--to assume direct control and responsibility in the political, economic and technological spheres. This involves nothing less than the replacement of parasitic entrepreneurship with the work ethic among the younger muwatin and the development of a collective ethos, which emphasizes a sense of united purpose and common destiny--rabitah masiriyyah--and personal involvement in the collective defense of the land. In the absence of such a social-psychological transformation among the muwatin, GCC's wealth, power and economic potential are destined to become illusory and transitory phenomena.

Intergrated Citizen Army

The cultural change prescribed above is a prime prerequisite for effective self-defense. GCC's stated goal of promoting self-reliance in the defense of the Gulf shall remain unfulfilled in the absence of comprehensive cultural change involving the principles of self sacrifice and collective action for noble ideals. Beyond a certain point, self-defense can not be bought and delegated to imported non-native mercenaries, like the Pakistanis and Jordanians, or to external powers with global interests. In view of the generally small native populations of the GCC states, any viable program of self-defense would have to be based on an integrated citizen army which can be swiftly mobilized to complement the regular armed forces in times of crisis. The GCC states are unlikely to impliment the citizen army model, since the cultural transformation necessary for its realization would be seen as a threat to dynastic rule of the absolutist variety.

The alternative to the citizen army is the GCC's present collectivity of disparate military forces which are not likely to be effective against a highly motivated adversary. The GCC states are able to field a total of approximately 110,000 troops, which are hardly sufficient to defend the massive expanse of GCC territory, particularly in the absence of a unified military doctrine, centralized command, standardized weaponry and integration of forces.

Outside Ties

Increasingly, during the last two decades, the Gulf states have become a part of the world political economy. Global energy interdependence and the Gulf states' own economic dependence on the industrial countries have been instrumental in integrating the GCC into the world system. This economic dependence has been reinforced by the GCC's manifest security needs which can not be met by marshalling of local resources. In an objective sense, there is little the GCC can do to achieve self-sufficiency in defense in the near future, despite Secretary Bishara's repeated declarations to the contrary. Consequently, the GCC will have to forge mutually beneficial and balanced military and economic relationships with key neighboring states which possess military potential. Such ties already exist between Jordan and Pakistan and several GCC states. However, in the long-range, there can be no substitute for a GCC-Egyptian linkage, in view of the manifest complementarity between

Egypt's substantial population and military resources and GCC's economic wealth. This would provide an 'Arab' solution to the Gulf's security problems without which the GCC will be unable to develop a strategic potential of its own to confront its uncertain future. However, the 'Egyptian solution' can not be effectively implemented until Egypt's return to Arab fold, which is dependent on the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

XVII. PROSPECTS FOR NEW MEMBERS

Political realities of the present Gulf milieu do not seem propitious for the admission of new members into the Council. The reasons for this prognosis are multiple. The admission of any new member state is likely to complicate GCC's tasks which are already substantial. The political systems of the peninsular states-- North and South Yemen and Iraq-- are incompatible with GCC's dynastic-tribal regimes. Nor is the Kingdom of Jordan a likely candidate in view of its contiguity to Israel, Hashimite dynastic base and military capabilities. Indeed, a Jordanian or Iraqi role in the GCC will threaten the primacy of Sa'udi Arabia, although such inclusions might provide greater interstate equilibrium but less cohesion. Unconfirmed reports of a Kuwaiti proposal to extend GCC membership to Iraq and Iran as a means to end the war are unlikely to bear fruit in the near future. Both Iran and Iraq are considered too radical to be included in GCC's conservative collectivity.

Despite the obvious obstacles, it is highly probable that North Yemen and Iraq shall seek GCC membership during the next half decade. As to Iran, it might seek financial reparation rather than membership in the GCC after the conclusion of its war with Iraq. A more likely possibility is the establishment of special relationships between GCC and neighboring states, which may involve some type of 'associate membership.' Possible candidates for associate membership would include North Yemen, Iraq, Jordan, and even Iran and South Yemen both

in less radical form. It might well be that the notion of associate membership will provide a useful GCC mechanism to deal with its potentially hostile environment. It is also likely that in the near future, the GCC will establish strong relations with the European Economic Community and other regional organizations.¹

XVIII. THE FOURTH SUMMIT

GCC's world looked glum as the six potentates gathered in Doha, Qatar, for their Fourth Summit conference on Nov 7-9, 1983. Aside from their unfinished work on internal security, defense and economic cooperation, the GCC leaders were urgently concerned with their immediate security problems:

1. The Iraq-Iran war and the threat to Hormuz.
2. The American/Israeli confrontation with Syria in Lebanon.
3. The fighting between Palestinian factions around Tripoli.

Every one of the foregoing conflicts involved the GCC states' immediate and long-range security and stability. Yet the GCC found itself impotent in shaping these events, much less devise solutions. Two opposing points of view dominated the Summit's secret discussions.¹ The 'isolationists' led by Oman argued for a 'Gulf first' strategy, centered on regional security and the defense of Hormuz. Oman asserted that the GCC should not be involved in Arab conflicts including the Syria-Iraq enmity, Palestinian infighting and the Lebanese civil strife. Instead, the GCC should unify itself ideologically and coordinate its educational systems and labor policies to face the threat from non-native Asians living in the Gulf.

As proponents of 'Arabism', Kuwait and the U.A.E. vehemently argued against the 'isolationist' position by rejecting the GCC's

regional character as being distinct from the Arab orbit. In their view "the disease of the Arabs is also ours and our security is connected to the security of the Arabs". Thus, "any conflict affecting the Palestinians, the Lebanese, the Syrians and the Iraqis concerns the GCC since many of them live and work in the Gulf". In the Arabist perspective, Syria was the key Arab state which 'held the cards' in Lebanon, the Palestinian conflict, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iraq-Iran war. In fact, the 'Arabists' were worried about the growing U.S. role in the Lebanese conflict, since it could be repeated in the Gulf, with dire consequences for the legitimacy of the ruling families. The Sa'udi position during the summit deliberations lay somewhere between the two opposing points of view, as King Fahd played the role of mediator.

The consensus of the summit conference was that the U.S. would definitely intervene if Iran proceeded to block Hormuz. Despite this conviction, the Summit authorized the Qatari Foreign Minister to announce that in the event of an Iranian blockage, the GCC would not invite American military intervention. It was significant that the GCC leaders and the Gulf press chose not to take notice of U.S. Admiral Joel Adams' visit and his statements on U.S. readiness to defend the Gulf. In fact most GCC rulers would reluctantly accept U.S. intervention to deter the Iranians. Yet they are deeply concerned with the negative consequences of a U.S. move, since they are "afraid of their people." The Gulf rulers continue to hope that Iraq shall keep its promise made to GCC not to use the Super Etandard/Exocet system

except as a last resort, after adequate warning to Iran and only against military targets²; Clearly, most GCC states would prefer a diplomatic settlement of the Iraq-Iran War.

The non-strategic agenda of the Doha summit conference included:

1. the strategic food reserve
2. proposals to build pipelines from the oil producing states to Oman,
3. the construction of an inter-GCC railroad and
4. the proposed unification of GCC currencies.³

XIX. FOUR SCENARIOS OF CONFLICT

The efficacy of intergovernmental and transnational groupings and alliances cannot be properly evaluated unless these organizations undergo the test of major conflict. Against the backdrop of GCC's external and internal conflictual milieux, four separate scenarios will be considered which the Council may confront during the next decade.

1. A Decisive Iranian Victory

In keeping with past practice, the Council will do its utmost to prevent a decisive Iranian victory, by supplying Iraq with additional billions in economic aid and military equipment. Should an Iranian breakthrough seem imminent, GCC is likely to take anyone of three steps, in addition to mobilizing its own forces:

- A. Encourage a larger Jordanian involvement in the war by underwriting its costs.
- B. Support politically and financially the deployment against Iran of a large Egyptian expeditionary force.
- C. Invite U.S./Western military intervention, as a last resort, to stop the Iranian advance.

In all likelihood, however, the Iranians will not be able, or may not choose to invade the northern Gulf, or pursue a deep penetration of Iraqi territory. Instead, the Islamic Republic may well decide to pursue limited aims, after making substantial gains at the war front. These aims could include the occupation of sizable Iraqi territory as a prelude to inducing a change of regime in Baghdad. The salient question for Iran and the GCC becomes: the configuration of the new Iraqi regime. GCC's probable preference would be a regime of 'national reconciliation' under Sunni leadership, in contrast to possible Iranian insistence on a Shi'ite-led Islamic polity. The GCC can be expected to play a diplomatic role in an eventual Iraqi settlement and contribute substantially to reconstruction efforts.

A change of leadership in Baghdad -- the replacement of Saddam Husayn -- without a clear-cut Iraqi defeat would be the best possible outcome for GCC. However, a significant regime change in Baghdad, which is directly prompted by Iranian battlefield successes, is likely to trigger a precipitous decline in the legitimacy of GCC rulers and a concomitant reinforcement of the insurrectionary potential of Sunni and Shi'i fundamentalist and Arab nationalist groups. Such developments would surely imperil the short-term and long-term stability of GCC regimes. The only modality of maintaining continued dynastic control would be to place significant portions of GCC countries under 'friendly' occupation that could involve combinations of Jordanian, Egyptian, Pakistani and even European troops under some type of American supervision. The possible Soviet responses are excluded from this scenario.

2. Decisive Arab Defeat by Israel or Israeli Military Participation in Gulf Operations

Any major Israeli military action against the Arabs is likely to have serious repercussions in the GCC area. The most likely scenario is an Israeli attack on Syria. Despite their general dislike of the Syrian regime, most GCC rulers can be expected to support Syria, at least financially. Syria is now seen as the "key" Arab state in the Gulf, in terms of influencing the Lebanese, Palestinians, and Arab-Israeli issues. While several GCC states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, are dissatisfied with the Asad regime, they do not appear to be inclined to favor its demise, particularly as a consequence of an Israeli victory. There are at least three reasons for this assessment:

- A. A Syrian defeat would further weaken the Arabs against Israel, and thereby make it impossible to induce the latter toward a Palestinian settlement that is politically 'safe' for the GCC to accept.
- B. Syrian-Israeli fighting and/or a Syrian defeat might result in the expansion of the Soviet presence in Syria.
- C. A Syrian defeat by a U.S.-supported Israel would intensify general Arab alienation from the United States, complicate GCC's legitimacy dilemma and make it more difficult for GCC rulers to maintain their American 'connections'.

A worse scenario would be direct Israeli military involvement in a Gulf crisis. Such a move would inflame popular sentiments and

trigger widespread and armed opposition against the United States, and Arab pro-American rulers, and lead to extensive sabotage of oil installations. An Israeli role is politically unacceptable, even if the GCC rulers happen to be in danger of collapse in the face of domestic opposition or even an Iranian invasion. Israeli participation in a multinational military effort in the Gulf is likely to result in consequences similar to those described above. The repercussions of such moves are expected to be detrimental to U.S. interests in virtually all Arab countries and in the Islamic orbit.

3. Super Power Intervention: U.S. and U.S.S.R

Any type of American military intervention would be popularly unwelcome, with the singular exception of a U. S. move to confront a clear-cut Soviet thrust toward the Gulf. In contrast, any Soviet effort to "save" the Arabs from defeat by Israel and/or the U.S. will create a radically different situation, since most nationalists and some fundamentalists would support the Soviets as a last resort, although with considerable reluctance. In sharp contrast, any overt Soviet offensive move, even in support of the Iranian regime, is likely to unite the GCC and consolidate and legitimize its ties with the United States. It is anticipated that under this scenario, U.S. military moves will evoke considerable popular support.

The opposite situation shall obtain in the event of an uninvited U.S. military action to occupy the oil fields during a future Arab oil embargo or to support an unpopular ruler facing an overthrow.

Even if American power could be deployed effectively to restore a fallen dynast or to prevent the collapse of a tottering regime, the legitimacy of such rulers would be virtually destroyed and their potential longevity seriously compromised. It is in this context that both Gulf rulers and their subjects view the American position in Lebanon. The question that is repeatedly asked is: Can Lebanon be a prelude to U.S. intervention in the Gulf? It is no mere accident that U.S. attempts to establish and secure the Gemayyil government in Lebanon is strongly opposed in the Gulf. Nor are Gulf rulers and elites pleased with U.S. policy in Lebanon, since its crude application in concert with Israel, detracts from the legitimacy of any Arab government which is tinged with pro-American leanings. No GCC ruler, would wish to be placed in the Lebanese situation, since the price of U.S. military support during a crisis would be prohibitive in terms of confronting Islamic fundamentalist and Arab nationalist opposition.

4. Domestic Unrest and Revolution

The present configurations of GCC societies includes at least six destabilizing catalysts which are likely to increase the potential for insurrectionary activity during the next decade. These are:

- A. Authoritarian Rule.
- B. Official Corruption.
- C. Rapid Modernization.
- D. Income Maldistribution.
- E. Ethnic-Sectarian Conflict.
- F. External Stimuli.

GCC rulers are objectively cognizant of the crisis environments that surround their existence. Yet their policy responses to crises are not likely to assure their political longevity, except perhaps in Kuwait. The popular response to the crisis situation has been alienation, apathy, or some form of organized opposition of an Islamist, nationalist, or leftist type. The exacerbation of any combination of the foregoing six crisis catalysts is likely to produce domestic manifestations of violence. It is highly probable that some of these opposition activities would escalate into attempts to overthrow the ruling dynasties. The most likely source of organized insurrection is the Islamist fundamentalist movement which can be found throughout the Gulf, both in its Sunni and Shi'ite variations. In a revolutionary setting, the Islamists could be joined by Arab nationalist and leftist elements to challenge the rulers, possibly with help from dissident military officers.

In order to forestall and defeat these insurrectionary movements, most GCC rulers have employed increasingly elaborate security services and armed forces, and have established mutual security ties. In addition, GCC rulers have attempted to neutralize the revolutionary potential of their nationals (muwatin) by importing large communities of foreigners from different ethno-religious backgrounds to achieve an uneasy equilibrium. A typical situation of 'communal balance' would include Egyptians, Palestinians, Yemenis, Sudanese, Indians, Iranians, Pakistanis and others, in addition to Europeans and Americans. In view of this heavy penetration of Gulf societies, the native opposition may have to ally itself with

dissident foreign residents to make a successful grab for power. The beginnings of this cross-ethnic alliance pattern could be seen in the Islamist Grand Mosque takeover in Mecca. As large expatriate communities continue to live and work in the Gulf, it is anticipated that there would be an increasing convergence between natives and resident foreigners within the Islamic Fundamentalist societies, as a prelude to possible revolutionary action.

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8. Al-Mustaqbal, April 4, 1981 pp. 10-11.
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